

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND  
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AS PERCEIVED BY PRINCIPALS AND  
SELECTED SITE-BASED DECISION MAKING (SBDM) COMMITTEE  
MEMBERS OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN REGION 5 EDUCATION SERVICE  
CENTER (ESC), TEXAS: A COHORT STUDY**

A Record of Study

by

LARRY SCOTT SHEPPARD

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May 2007

Major Subject: Educational Administration

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	John R. Hoyle
Committee Members,	Toby Marshall Egan
	Luana Zellner
	Jon Denton
Head of Department,	Jim Scheurich

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Relationship between Student Performance and Leadership Practices as  
Perceived by Principals and Selected Site-based Decision Making (SBDM)  
Committee Members of Middle Schools in Region 5 Education Service Center  
(ESC), Texas: A Cohort Study. (May 2007)

Larry Scott Sheppard, B.Mus., Lamar University;

M.Ed., Stephen F. Austin State University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. John R. Hoyle

This study, one of four cohort studies, was designed to determine the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected site-based decision making committee members of middle schools in the Region 5 Education Service Center area of Texas. Using the Leadership Practices Inventory developed by Kouzes and Posner, the study compared the perceptions of middle school principals and selected observers regarding leadership practices. These leadership ratings were compared to student achievement for each campus in the study. In addition, the study examined if selected demographic variables impact the perception of leaders and observers in regard to leadership.

For schools in this particular study, there was no direct correlation between perceived leadership practices of the principals and student achievement as measured by the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests. This was true of total LPI scores and also of each individual practice measured by the LPI.

The data revealed that principals in the study rated themselves higher as a group than their observers rated them on the LPI. This trend was consistent for the total instrument and for each leadership practice. There were also similarities, however, between the two groups. The practice Model the Way had the highest mean for both groups, while Inspire a Shared Vision and Enable Others to Act were rated lower by both groups of respondents.

A researcher-developed questionnaire was used to gather demographic information about each respondent. Years of experience, age group, gender, and ethnicity were all studied to determine if they had any effect on responses. The results indicate that there were some differences when principals and observers were studied separately, but these differences were minimized when the two groups were combined.

Of particular interest was the fact that younger principals and less experienced principals rated themselves more conservatively than their older and more experienced colleagues. Younger observers and less experienced observers, however, had a propensity to rate their leader high when compared to older observers and more experienced observers. Neither ethnicity nor gender had an impact on leader ratings.

## DEDICATION

I first wish to dedicate this work to my beautiful wife Michele. In our 13 years of marriage, you have believed in me and supported me in every endeavor. As I put in extremely long hours as a band director and later as a principal, your love, support, and inspiration helped me succeed. You have also gently guided me in keeping a healthy balance between my career, the pursuit of my doctorate, and our family.

To my parents, Larry and Pat Sheppard, I want to say thank you for everything you have done for me. I will probably never fully realize the sacrifices you made so that my sister and I could pursue our dreams. You raised me in a Christian home and taught me the value of hard work and perseverance. You put me through college and supported my decision to become a teacher, and then continued to support me as I pursued graduate school later in life. Because of my parents' love and teaching, I never doubted that I could succeed in all aspects of life. You also continue to teach and guide the next generation of our family as wonderful grandparents.

Our three sons, Spencer, Tyler, and Walker, are amazing gifts from God. Spencer and Tyler are both driven to do their best in the classroom and in every endeavor they undertake. Our youngest son, Walker, is following in his brothers' footsteps with a smile that warms the hearts of everyone he sees. All three of you share the ability to brighten the day of others with a great sense of humor and a caring and compassionate outlook. My favorite days are those spent with family enjoying the simple pleasures of life, and I thank you all for your patience during my years in the doctoral program.

And finally, Oscar and Faye Davis are the best in-laws anyone could ask for. You have helped us as young parents in many ways. Your love and support have been invaluable as we have both juggled our careers and our many other obligations. I thank you for everything you do for our family.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. John Hoyle is one of the most recognized figures in education today. His love of students, his values, and his passion can be seen in all aspects of his life. In the classroom, the lecture hall, and in his writings he is on the cutting edge of educational leadership. Dr. Hoyle is an inspiration to me and I greatly appreciate his guidance in my studies and in my career.

Dr. Luana Zellner and Dr. Toby Egan have also been very supportive throughout my years at Texas A&M. Through difficult courses and the process of writing this record of study, they have been positive influences on me. Dr. Jon Denton graciously agreed to join my committee late in the process, and I am grateful for his help. Each committee member has always been there when needed and their respective knowledge is impressive to say the least. Dr. Homer Tolson, though not on my committee, willingly gave his time to help me understand statistics. I am very thankful for the opportunity to learn from him.

Working on a doctorate while leading a school from the principal's chair takes a great amount of understanding and support from within a school district. I have been blessed to work in Katy ISD where I am surrounded by educators of the highest quality. Dr. Leonard Merrell and Dr. Elizabeth Clark are tireless in their pursuit of excellence. Thanks to both of these great educators for leading by example and for guiding Katy ISD to incredible successes. I am also forever grateful to them for bringing me to Katy ISD. Dr. Ron Jetton's words of encouragement have also been

extremely meaningful to me along the way to finishing this project. He always finds the time to help solve problems and his positive approach is greatly appreciated.

I cannot say enough about my direct supervisor, Dr. Linda Menius, and her leadership. I admire her knowledge and skills as an administrator and her ability to teach others. I always look forward to our visits because they never fail to bring a smile and a laugh regardless of the situation.

Katy Junior High School is blessed with a great faculty and the support of a fine community. Everyone on this team works to create a positive climate and culture for our school. Students remain at the heart of all decisions and the tradition of excellence continues largely because of the dedication of the staff. Through many changes and challenges we have always pulled together to succeed.

I started my administrative career and also began my pursuit of the doctorate while working in Kirbyville CISD. My superintendent at the time, Bob Tilley, helped me through my first year as a principal. Prior to my move to administration, he was the best superintendent a band director could ask for. Along with Mr. Tilley, assistant superintendent Robert Lane, the administrative team, and a caring board of trustees were always there for me personally and for the students and staff of Kirbyville CISD.

I will never forget the many things I learned from Bill Godwin. As the principal of Kirbyville High School in the early 1990s, he was way ahead of his time. He taught concepts in staff development sessions that I heard a decade later as “new” concepts from renowned educational experts and speakers. His passion for kids and educators is inspirational. Mr. Godwin’s guidance has been invaluable to me as a



teacher, an administrator, a colleague, and a friend. I quote “Mr. G” in almost every staff development session that I lead today.

Cohorts are meant to support and assist each other through the endurance test that is the doctoral program. While not in an official cohort, few people have the unique opportunity that I experienced. My sister, Stacey Arnold, and I took every class together and spent countless hours in study sessions throughout the years. I believe we are closer now than at any other point in our lives. Sharing the experience with us were the other two members of our unofficial cohort, Fred Brent and Benny Soileau. The summers in College Station and the many drives to Houston or Texas A&M have created a bond that is unbreakable. “The Beaumont Bunch,” as Dr. Hoyle named us because we were all from the Beaumont, Texas, area, will remain friends and a real cohort forever.

Once I moved to Katy, I was fortunate to meet Joe Graham. Joe and I started an “accountability group” for Katy ISD administrators in the Texas A&M program. Steve Shidemantle joined us and helped me stay focused on completing my project. There were many afternoons that I would not have worked on this paper if I did not know someone was waiting on me at the library to research and write.

Another important influence has been my uncle, Dr. Robert Nicks. Uncle Bob led the way for me and my sister, becoming the first member of our family to earn a doctorate from Texas A&M. There are many educators in our extended family, and as a result of this fact, many family gatherings have led to discussions about teaching and administration. Uncle Bob and Aunt Debbie have both been extremely valuable and supportive throughout my teaching and administrative career.

At Lamar University I found some incredible mentors in Dr. James Simmons, Dr. Barry Johnson, and Dr. Raul Ornelas. Each helped me pursue my dream of becoming a band director and then provided the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in this field. All three of these great men taught me more than music. I use the skills I learned from them each and every day as an educator and administrator.

Dr. Karl and Lottie Wadenpfuhl have been important to me since I first decided to become an educator. I admired the incredible band directing skills of Dr. Wadenpfuhl since I was in high school, and both of them held me by the hand as I embarked on my own career in music education. From the music store to their living room, I will always cherish our time and conversations.

Finally, I must acknowledge the importance of the two teachers that first inspired me to become a band director, Mr. Sammy Almany and Mr. Karl Wadenpfuhl, Jr. In junior high and high school, both provided a band experience that led me to love music and made me want to provide the same experience for my students. They mentored me as a young student and later as a young teacher. Their influence still guides me today.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT .....	iii
DEDICATION.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	xi
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xvii
 CHAPTER	
I     INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem .....	4
Purpose of the Study.....	5
Research Questions.....	5
Operational Definitions .....	6
Assumptions .....	8
Limitations.....	9
Significance of the Study.....	9
Organization of the Study.....	10
II    REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	11
Introduction .....	11
Leadership .....	12
Management and Leadership.....	20
Educational Leadership .....	27
Principal Leadership.....	30
Junior High Schools and Middle Schools.....	39
Measuring Leadership .....	42
Accountability in Texas Public Schools.....	47
Summary.....	57

CHAPTER	Page
III METHODOLOGY .....	60
Introduction .....	60
Population .....	62
Instrumentation .....	62
Data Collection .....	64
Data Analysis .....	66
IV PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA .....	67
Introduction .....	67
Procedures and Presentation .....	67
Results of Related Research Questions .....	74
Summary .....	110
V SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .....	114
Introduction .....	114
Summary of Findings .....	115
Conclusions .....	127
Recommendations .....	129
Implications for Further Study .....	131
REFERENCES .....	133
APPENDIX A .....	138
APPENDIX B .....	141
APPENDIX C .....	144
APPENDIX D .....	146
APPENDIX E .....	148
APPENDIX F .....	150
APPENDIX G .....	152
APPENDIX H .....	154
VITA .....	156

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	Page
1. TAKS Tests Administered in Middle School Grades, 2004-2005 .....	50
2. Requirements for Each Rating Category (as Applicable to Middle Schools) (TEA, 2005a) .....	51
3. Overview of 2005 System Components (as Applicable to Middle Schools) (TEA, 2005a) .....	52
4. 2005 AYP Indicators (TEA, 2005b) .....	55
5. Reliability Coefficients for the LPI .....	63
6. Leadership Practices and Corresponding LPI Statement .....	69
7. Years of Experience of Principal Respondents .....	69
8. Years of Experience of Observer Respondents .....	70
9. Age Group of Principal Respondents .....	70
10. Age Group of Observer Respondents .....	71
11. Gender of Principal Respondents .....	71
12. Gender of Observer Respondents .....	72
13. Ethnicity of Principal Respondents .....	72
14. Ethnicity of Observer Respondents .....	73
15. Texas Education Agency AEIS Ratings of Respondent's Campuses ..	73
16. Percentage of All TAKS Tests Passed by Responding Campuses .....	74
17. Correlation between LPI Total Scores and All TAKS Test Passed .....	76
18. Correlation between LPI Challenge the Process (CTP) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed .....	78

TABLE	Page
19. Correlation between LPI Inspire a Shared Vision (ISV) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed .....	80
20. Correlation between LPI Enable Others to Act (EOA) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed .....	82
21. Correlation between LPI Model the Way (MTW) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed .....	84
22. Correlation between LPI Encourage the Heart (ETH) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed .....	86
23. Comparative Statistics for Total LPI Scores .....	88
24. ANOVA Table for Total LPI Scores .....	89
25. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Challenge the Process .....	89
26. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Challenge the Process .....	89
27. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Inspire a Shared Vision.....	90
28. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Inspire a Shared Vision...	90
29. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Enable Others to Act .....	91
30. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Enable Others to Act.....	91
31. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Model the Way ....	92
32. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Model the Way.....	92
33. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Encourage the Heart .....	93
34. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Encourage the Heart.....	93
35. Leadership Practices Inventory Percentile Rankings .....	93
36. Percentile Rankings of Principals and Observers.....	94

TABLE	Page
37. Observer Ratings of Principals—by Years of Experience .....	96
38. Observer Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Years of Experience .....	96
39. Self Ratings of Principals—by Years of Experience.....	97
40. Self Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Years of Experience ....	98
41. Estimated Marginal Means—Years of Experience .....	98
42. Pairwise Comparisons—Years of Experience.....	99
43. Observer Ratings of Principals—by Age Group .....	100
44. Observer Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Age Group.....	101
45. Self Ratings of Principals—by Age Group .....	101
46. Self Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Age Group.....	102
47. Estimated Marginal Means—Age Group .....	102
48. Pairwise Comparisons—Age Group .....	103
49. Observer Ratings of Principals—by Gender .....	104
50. Observer Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Gender.....	104
51. Self Ratings of Principals—by Gender .....	105
52. Self Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Gender .....	105
53. Estimated Marginal Means—Gender .....	106
54. Pairwise Comparisons—Gender.....	106
55. Observer Ratings of Principals—by Ethnicity .....	107
56. Observer Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Ethnicity .....	108
57. Self Ratings of Principals—by Ethnicity.....	108

TABLE	Page
58. Self Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Ethnicity .....	109
59. Estimated Marginal Means—Ethnicity .....	110
60. Pairwise Comparisons—Ethnicity.....	110



## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	Page
1. Comparison of LPI Total Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed .....	77
2. Comparison of LPI Challenge the Process (CTP) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed .....	79
3. Comparison of LPI Inspire a Shared Vision (ISV) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed .....	81
4. Comparison of LPI Enable Others to Act (EOA) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed .....	83
5. Comparison of LPI Model the Way (MTW) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed .....	85
6. Comparison of LPI Encourage the Heart (ETH) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed .....	87

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Quality leadership is essential to the success of any organization. It is necessary to help organizations develop a vision, commit people to action, convert followers into leaders, and leaders into change agents (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). A leader is an individual who has the capacity to influence others to use their skills and expertise to move an organization toward established goals, assisting individuals in understanding and adjusting to the organization's environment (Green, 2001). Kouzes and Posner (2002) indicate that leaders should be honest, forward looking, competent, and inspiring—the core foundations of leadership that have endured decades of technological expansion and economic fluctuation.

According to Bennis and Thomas (2002), recent research has led to the conclusion that true leaders are adaptable, life-long learners. They learn from difficult circumstances and events; successfully navigating through negative situations. Furthermore, great leaders possess four essential skills: an ability to engage others in a shared meaning, a distinctive and compelling voice, a sense of integrity, and an adaptive capacity. Weller (2004) contends that successful leaders practice both the art and science of leadership. The art of leadership involves communication and human relations, whereas the science of leadership involves content knowledge and other necessary skills.

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The style and format for this record of study follow that of the *Journal of Educational Research*.

One such leadership skill that Giuliani (2002) emphasizes is preparation. He believes that even highly skilled leaders must prepare relentlessly. As he states, “Leaders may possess brilliance, extraordinary vision, fate, even luck. Those help: but no one, no matter how gifted, can perform without careful preparation, thoughtful experiment, and determined follow-through” (p. 52). Such preparation and diligence leads to good decision making, which is perhaps the most important part of leadership.

Leadership has evolved over time, resulting in less emphasis on management in today’s world of collaborative leadership styles. Controlling managers with an unquestioning workforce have given way to true leaders that must be facilitators rather than dictators (Lewis, 1993). According to Sergiovanni (1990), schools should follow this same trend of emphasizing leadership over management. He writes that management is necessary in schools, but that administrators often provide little more—resulting in a lack of true leadership. These institutions are overmanaged and underled.

Anfara (2001) points out four traits associated with effective school leaders. These traits illustrate that the leader must be: involved in curriculum and instruction, able to develop and communicate a shared vision and mission, trustworthy and collaborative in nature, and understand the importance of staff development. Effective schools are led by administrators with high expectations for students and teachers (Carter and Klotz, 1990). These school leaders hold people accountable, resulting in higher student achievement.

Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) indicate that school leaders play a significant role in the improvement of student learning. This impact comes both directly and indirectly. They also found that leadership is second only to classroom instruction in improving student learning; and furthermore, that leadership effects are largest when challenges are high and there is a great need for quality leadership.

Leithwood, et al. (2004) also point out that every school is a unique organization with differing needs. Leaders must respond to the needs of the specific school in order to make a difference. Having basic leadership knowledge and skills is often inadequate in a school setting. Changes in student populations as well as the stresses of increasing accountability systems are major challenges to school leaders.

Leadership at the middle school level is particularly unique and requires some distinct qualities. This is partly due to the developmental needs of middle school aged students and their complex changes during early adolescence (Anfara, 2001). For a middle school principal to be effective, he or she should have extensive training in early adolescent education. Along with this training, the principal's position of importance gives the leader the potential to initiate and sustain improvement in student academic performance and in other areas that are important educationally (Lucas, 2003). Traits often seen in principals of exemplary middle schools include strength, vision, autonomy, inspiration, and evaluation (Ruppert, 2003). Since middle schools are complex organizations, the principal's leadership is essential to the processes involved in creating a vision for the school and for developing and

maintaining a positive school culture where continuous improvement is important and possible (Lucas, 2003).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Texas schools are becoming more diverse as they are also facing more pressure to succeed from politicians and the public. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 and the Texas state accountability system have increased the pressures of accountability. Student performance must continually rise to meet higher standards, so the role of the principal must focus more and more on instructional leadership. In 28 of 35 middle schools in Region 5, fewer than 70% of tested students met standards on the 2004 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Some of these schools currently meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) performance standards as required by NCLB; however, they will not continue to meet the rising AYP standards unless the percentage of students passing TAKS tests also increases each year.

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) examined the effects of leadership on student achievement in their meta-analysis of 30 years of research on the topic. They identified twenty-one leadership responsibilities that, when practiced effectively by school leaders, lead to increased student academic achievement. Similarly, the work of Kouzes and Posner (2002) identified five leadership practices that are found in effective leaders of any organization. These five practices of effective leadership are: (1) challenging the process; (2) inspiring a shared vision; (3) enabling others to act; (4) modeling the way; and (5) encouraging the heart.

Successful leaders utilize collaboration as they build relationships with all stakeholders. They empower the members within their organization and develop a shared vision. They exemplify the beliefs and behaviors that are critical to the culture and success of the group. All of these actions lead to extraordinary accomplishments (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Middle school principals in Texas schools have the daunting task of using these leadership skills to increase student performance for all students in every student group.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected site-based decision making (SBDM) committee members of middle schools in Region 5 Education Service Center (ESC), Texas. The study compared the perceptions of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding leadership practices. In addition, the study determined if selected demographic variables impact the perception of leadership practices within the two identified groups – principals and selected SBDM committee members.

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions.

1. Is there a relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected SBDM committee members of middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas, as measured by the

Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b)?

2. Are there differences in the responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?
3. Do selected demographic variables impact responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?

### **Operational Definitions**

This study contains the following operational definitions:

**Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)**—The AEIS is a comprehensive reporting system first used in 1990-91. Since that time, campus and district AEIS reports have been generated and published annually for all campuses and districts in the state (Texas). All indicators used for accountability are reported in the AEIS, with additional data to indicate how each grade level and different populations performed on standardized tests (TAKS and SDAA II). Additionally, the reports show participation rates on standardized tests, demographics of students and staff, program information, and financial information. (Texas Education Agency, 2005a)

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**—The accountability component of No Child Left Behind in which districts, campuses, and the state are required to meet performance standards or performance improvements, as well as participation

rates, on reading/language arts and math assessments. In addition, graduation rate standards must be met by high schools and attendance rate standards must be met by elementary schools, middle schools or junior highs, combined elementary/secondary schools not offering grade 12, and districts not offering grade 12. (Texas Education Agency, 2005b)

**Campus Rating System**—In Texas, campuses and districts receive a rating of Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable, or Academically Unacceptable based on student performance on TAKS or SDAA II tests and other indicators described in the AEIS report.

**High Performing School(s)**—For this study only; these are schools that receive a campus rating of Recognized or Exemplary in the Academic Excellence Indicator System.

**Leadership Practices**—The five practices identified by Kouzes & Posner (2002): challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart.

**Middle School**—A campus generally composed of students in grades six through eight. However, the campus may include any consecutive combination of two or more grade levels including grades five through eight.

**Principal**—The lead campus administrator.

**Perceived**—To attain awareness or understanding of.

**Region 5 Education Service Center (ESC)**—Regional education service centers were created by the Texas legislature in 1967 to combine certain tasks common



to school districts. Region 5 ESC serves the school districts of Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Orange, Newton, and Tyler counties plus High Island ISD.

**Relationship**—Connecting or binding participants, ideas, or objects.

**Selected Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Committee Members**—The chairman or designee and four other members of the campus improvement committee.

**Student Performance**—The percentage of all TAKS tests passed on a school campus.

**Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)** —The most recent battery of standardized tests designed to measure student performance on the essential curriculum in reading/language arts, math, social studies, and science.

### **Assumptions**

The following assumptions pertain to this study:

1. The respondents surveyed will understand the scope of the study and the language of the instrument, will be competent in self-reporting, and will respond objectively and honestly.
2. The researcher will be impartial and objective in the collection and analysis of data.
3. Interpretation of the data collected will accurately reflect the intent of the respondents.
4. The methodology proposed and described offers the most logical and appropriate design for this particular research project.

**Limitations**

1. The scope of this study is limited to the information and data acquired from literature review, student performance data, and survey instruments.
2. The scope of this study is limited to the middle schools in Region 5 Education Service Center, Texas.
3. The findings of this study may not be generalized to any group other than the middle schools in Region 5 Education Service Center, Texas.

**Significance of the Study**

Leadership at the middle school level requires some unique qualities because of the nature of early adolescent students. Middle schools have an important mission to meet the developmental needs of their students, who are undergoing rapid and complex changes due to their age (Anfara, 2001). The principal of such a school is the key person in the design and implementation of an instructional program suited for the success of middle school students. The leader must understand the diverse needs of the adolescent learner (Weller, 2004).

Currently, there are many studies on leadership practices, but few that specifically link student performance and leadership practices as perceived by leaders and other members of the organization. This study is one of four cohort studies designed to measure the relationship between perceived leadership behaviors of school administrators and their effects on student achievement. The four groups of leaders studied by the cohort were elementary principals, middle school principals, high school principals, and superintendents. This particular study will compare the

perceptions of middle school principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding leadership practices. In addition, the study will determine if selected demographic variables impact the perception of leadership practices within the two identified groups.

### **Organization of the Study**

There are five distinct chapters to this record of study. Chapter I provides an overview of the research—including a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, operational definitions, assumptions and limitations of the study, and the significance of the study. A comprehensive review of the literature on leadership in general and educational leadership as it relates to student performance is contained in Chapter II. Chapter III is a description of the methodology used in the study. The research results and analysis are contained in Chapter IV. The record of study concludes with Chapter V, which has the researcher's conclusions as well as recommendations for further study.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

This literature review was designed to provide an overview of leadership in general, educational leadership, and leadership specific to the middle school or junior high principal position. It begins with the topic of leadership, which includes: definitions; choosing a leader; leadership past, present, and future; leadership traits; the art and science of leadership; and the critical nature of leadership.

Next is a review of the literature on management and leadership, which includes: history; the behavioral school of management theory; myths of leadership; and management versus leadership. Educational leadership is then presented followed by principal leadership, which includes the topics: history of the principal position; importance of principal leadership; effective leadership traits of principals; principal as instructional leader; and traits of effective instructional leaders. Narrowing the topic even further, the literature on junior high schools and middle schools is presented, which includes: history of junior highs and middle schools; and junior high and middle schools principals.

In the next section, measuring leadership, the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and the associated traits are discussed in detail. This chapter concludes with a look at accountability in Texas schools, which includes: the history of the Texas accountability system; current Texas accountability system; and the federal accountability system and Texas.

## **Leadership**

### *Definitions*

Leadership is a difficult concept to define, though many have tried. It is said that definitions of the concept are almost as numerous as the scholars engaged in its study (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). Bennis and Nanus (1985) claimed there were more than 350 definitions of leadership, with thousands of empirical investigations of leaders to date. Some definitions are simple, such as the one from Maxwell (1998) who states that leadership is nothing more than influence. Martin M. Chemers (as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 2001) and others contend that leadership is a process of social influence where one person is able to motivate others to accomplish a common task. The idea that leadership involves a social influence process in which one individual exerts intentional influence over others within an organization is common in many definitions of the concept.

In basic terms, people believe that leaders make a difference and they want to understand why. As cited in Kouzes and Posner (2002), Alan Keith of Lucas Digital states, “Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen” (p. 3). Even more to the point, “Harry Truman once defined leadership as the art of getting people to do what they might not otherwise do, and like it” (Hesselbein, 2002, p. xi).

### *Choosing a Leader*

Reinforcing the concept that leadership is about influence and relationships, Kouzes & Posner (2003a) point out that for leadership to exist others have to choose

to follow. Hesselbein (2002) agrees by stating, “In the end, leadership is all about valuing relationships, about valuing people” (p. 35). When people choose to follow, the result is a relationship between the leader and the followers that is based on mutual needs and interests. In searching for a leader to follow, most people are concerned with finding someone who is honest, forward-looking, inspiring, and competent. We tend to admire these qualities in a leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a).

According to John Gardner (as cited in Kouzes & Posner, 2003a), former secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, the factors that determine whether or not people will follow a leader are: They must believe that the leader is capable of meeting their needs; and they must be able to relate to the leader and the leader to them. It may be accepted that the leader is not a superhuman being that can personally fix every problem, but if the leader and constituents connect on the issues, the leader will develop a loyal following (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a).

Senge (1990) writes of our view of leaders as special people, or heroes that set the direction and make key decisions. We see a leader as one who can “energize the troops” (p. 340). Senge points out that these beliefs are “deeply rooted in an individualistic and nonsystemic worldview” (p. 340). He goes on to say,

Especially in the West, leaders are *heroes*—great men (and occasionally women) who ‘rise to the fore’ in times of crisis. Our prevailing leadership myths are still captured by the image of the captain of the cavalry leading the charge to rescue the settlers from the attacking Indians.” (p. 340)

The new view of leadership, however, has changed. The tasks of the leader may be more subtle, but equally important. “In a learning organization, leaders are designers, stewards, and teachers. They are responsible for *building organizations* where people

continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models—that is, they are responsible for learning” (Senge, 1990, p. 340).

### *Leadership: Past, Present, and Future*

In Bennis, Speitzer, and Cummings (2001), Kouzes and Posner refer to four lessons that bring leadership from the past into the future. Lesson one is that leadership is attainable by everyone. It is not a mystical power that only a blessed few possess. Leaders are not born; they are made through a series of developmental skills and learnable traits. A leadership title is only that—a title. You do not have to have a title to lead, nor does having a title make you a leader. These leadership experts state:

By viewing leadership as a fixed set of character traits or as linked to an exalted position, a self-fulfilling prophecy has been created that dooms the future to having a limited set of leaders. It's far healthier and more productive to start with the assumption that it's possible for everyone to lead (Bennis et al., p. 83).

Lesson two is that leadership is about relationships. People are looking for leaders that can see situations from multiple points of view and can get along well with others. In Bennis, et al. (2001), Kouzes and Posner write, “At the heart of the relationship is trust. Without trust you cannot lead. Exemplary leaders are devoted to building relationships based on mutual respect and caring” (p. 85).

Lesson three is that leadership requires action. A leader's action is more inspirational to others than a vision alone. “Starting a new organization, turning around a losing operation, greatly improving the social condition, enhancing the quality of peoples' lives demands a proactive spirit. Waiting for permission to begin

is not characteristic of leaders. Acting with a sense of urgency is” (Bennis et al., p. 87).

Lesson four is that the leader must manage himself before managing others. Knowing a personal level of commitment and what it takes to succeed is critical to the success of the person and the organization he or she leads. “Self-knowledge is an essential part of becoming a leader. To become a leader you must become yourself, and this prescription is one of life’s most difficult” (p. 88). Leaders that are unaware of their personal strengths and weaknesses will ultimately be detrimental to the organization. The leader must “know thyself”—and know where he wants to go—before others will sign on to follow.

Greenberg-Walt and Robertson (as cited in Bennis et al., 2001) point to research that says shared leadership “will be the leadership model of the future” (p. 140). Shared leadership is just what it sounds like. It may be a formal system where CEO duties are split between multiple people, or there are multiple people at the top of the organization that function as a leadership team. Another system of shared leadership is the now common practice where staff members lead through collaboration and formal or informal teams. Workers today expect a certain voice in decision making within the organization.

### *Leadership Traits*

In attempts to further define or describe leadership, some create lists to explain the requirements, attributes, or traits of leadership or leaders themselves. Drucker’s (2001) list includes:



1. Setting and having goals, a vision, and a mission.
2. The realization that leadership is a responsibility, not a rank or privilege.
3. The leader sees others' successes for what they are and works to develop strong association.
4. Earns the trust of others.
5. Understands that the ultimate task of leadership is to create human energies and human vision. (p. 271)

Kouzes and Posner (2002) contend that leaders should be honest, forward looking, competent, and inspiring; the core foundations of leadership that have endured decades of technological expansion and economic fluctuation. Bennis and Thomas (2002) state that great leaders possess four essential skills: an ability to engage others in a shared meaning, a distinctive and compelling voice, a sense of integrity, and an adaptive capacity. Maxwell (2002) links the critical nature of two extremely important leadership characteristics—character and trust—by explaining that character makes trust possible and trust makes leadership possible.

Yukl (as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 2001) includes a long list of leader traits with four of the most important ones being:

- Self-confident leaders are more likely to set high goals for self and followers, try difficult tasks, and persist in the face of adversity.
- Stress-tolerant leaders make good decisions, stay calm, and are decisive in difficult situations.

- Emotionally mature leaders are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, strive for self improvement, and maintain cooperative relationships with others.
- Leaders with integrity have behaviors that are consistent with their stated beliefs, and they are honest, ethical, responsible, and trustworthy.

Hesselbein (2002) describes the person she refers to as the “how to be” leader as one who has many specific traits. She contends that these traits are necessary in the leaders of today’s organizations. This “how to be” leader values the people in the organization and knows they are the greatest asset of the organization. The leader builds and disperses leadership—“distributing leadership to the outermost edges of the circle to unleash the power of shared responsibility” (p. 8). He or she articulates the vision of the organization’s future in such a way that others are compelled to pursue that vision. “Through a consistent focus on mission, the ‘how to be’ leader gives the dispersed and diverse leaders of the enterprise a clear sense of direction and the opportunity to find meaning in their work” (p. 9).

Continuing the focus on people and relationships, Hesselbein’s “how to be” leader is a good listener that is always focused on the customers and their values. He or she values and nurtures the people within the organization as well to foster a healthy and successful enterprise.

The “tough” leaders of the past, who saved their manners for their social lives and believed in barking orders and the power of command and control, are now part of history. In their place are leaders who demonstrate in language and behavior their appreciation and respect for the men and women of the enterprise. (Hesselbein, 2002, p. 31)

Power becomes less important to today's leader as responsibility, dispersed leadership, vision, mission, and building relationships becomes essential.

It is clear that leadership is a complex idea. Some of the important facets of leadership are respect, experience, emotional strength, people skills, discipline, vision, momentum, and timing—and this list is not exhaustive (Maxwell, 2002). Maxwell goes on to say that there are three qualities a leader must exemplify to build trust. These qualities are competence, connection, and character. Perhaps the reason there are so many definitions of leadership and lists of leadership traits is because there is a need for more than one type of leadership. As stated by Kouzes and Posner (2003a),

No two leaders, no two constituent groups, and no two days in the life of leader and constituents are exactly alike. Although the practices of leadership, like those of service, may be definable and can be generalized about at some level, they are distinct and unique at the moment of the encounter. (p. 11)

### *Art and Science of Leadership*

Leadership can also be defined in terms of art or science. Bennis (1989) compares leadership to beauty, because both are hard to define but you know them when you see them. Weller, Jr. (2004) believes that the art of leadership involves excellent human relations and interpersonal communications skills. Leaders must be people oriented and empathetic toward those they lead. In addition, he believes that the science of leadership is research based and requires leaders to study and apply relevant findings regarding leadership to their individual situations. He contends that excellent leaders practice both the art and the science of leadership, with each part being equally important. Kouzes and Posner (2003a) agree that leadership is part art

and part science. Stating that “leadership is a means of personal expression” (p. 11), they compare leadership to other arts such as, painting, music, dance, acting, and writing. Kouzes and Posner (2003a) also state, “Leadership, too, is intangible. It is a performing art. It is an encounter. Leadership is something we experience in an interaction with another human being” (p. 11).

Regardless of whether leadership is considered an art or a science, it does not come automatically with a particular position or title. Meyer and Slechta (2002) point out that title, position, style, personality, or possession of certain skills do not define leadership. Leaders, however, do have many of these items in common. “Although it’s true that some people are born with greater natural gifts than others, the ability to lead is really a collection of skills, nearly all of which can be learned and improved” (Maxwell, 2002, p. 12-13).

### *Critical Nature of Leadership*

While there are many definitions of leadership, there is agreement that leadership and the leader are critical to the success of any organization. Bennis and Nanus (1985) call leadership the pivotal force behind successful organizations. They go further in pointing out that leadership is necessary to help organizations develop a vision, commit people to action, and convert followers into leaders, and leaders into change agents. A leader is an individual who has the capacity to influence others to use their skills and expertise to move an organization toward established goals, assisting individuals in understanding and adjusting to the organization’s environment. Leaders are visionaries that make things happen. “Great leaders have a

knack for inventing their own future. They literally experience their victories or accomplishments in their minds long before they actually occur” (Hoyle, 1995, p. 17).

Kouzes and Posner (2002) contend that it is important for people to be able to believe in their leaders. We must view them as trustworthy, knowledgeable and skilled, and know that they are excited and enthusiastic about the mission and direction of the group or organization. Members of an organization refer to the behavior of the leader to determine the expectations for their own behavior. Therefore, their choices are often modeled after the actions of the leader. The leader’s actions also set the tone for living out the values and vision of the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a). To put it simply, “Your leadership ability—for better or for worse—always determines your effectiveness and the potential impact of your organization” (Maxwell, 2002, p.1).

## **Management and Leadership**

### *History*

Frederick Taylor, who is often referred to as the Father of Scientific Management, worked his way up the ladder from a common laborer to chief engineer. He sought a system designed to increase the efficiency of workers by using them more effectively. More efficient workers would lead to greater productivity and a more successful organization. He used time and motion studies to determine the most productive ways to accomplish specific labor tasks. To Taylor and his followers, people and machines were almost synonymous. (Hoy & Miskel, 2001)

A contemporary and associate of Frederick Taylor, Henry Gantt was working on efficiency and effectiveness of workers from the angle of scheduling and rewards. The motivation for workers to do more in order to receive a bonus was realized through Gantt's efforts. The Gantt Chart became widely used as a tool to schedule work (Montana & Charnov, 2000).

Mary Parker Follett, known as The Mother of Scientific Management, also approached the ideas of management more from the perspective of the worker. She stressed the use of conflict resolution in the workplace and was a proponent of human relations. She was also a leader in the use of collaboration to solve problems in the workplace (Montana & Charnov, 2000).

Rather than approaching organizational management from the worker perspective as Taylor, Gantt, and Follett had done, Henry Fayol and Luther Gulick looked at the topic from the perspective of the executive. Fayol believed that administration could be broken down into five basic functions. These functions include planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling. Gulick's list of functions was slightly longer, but had much in common with the thoughts of Fayol. His list included: Planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting (Hoy & Miskel, 2001).

### *The Behavioral School of Management Theory*

The behavioral school of management theory came out of the famous Hawthorne studies at the Hawthorne Works of the Western Electric Company. These experiments were conducted by two Harvard professors, Elton Mayo and Fritz Roethlisberger,

between 1927 and 1932. Their main objective was to study the relationship between physical conditions and the productivity of workers. The findings indicated that the informal organization greatly influenced productivity. The workers' social structure dictated that they contribute to the output of the group, but that they did not do too much individually as that would make the others look less productive by comparison. The most significant conclusion of his study was that workers were influenced more by their peers than by management or money. (Hoy & Miskel, 2001)

Chester Barnard defined formal and informal organizations in his classic work *Functions of the Executive* (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). His Theory of Authority was based on the belief that the worker's free will and acceptance helped determine the effectiveness of management (Barnard, 1938). According to Barnard, orders falling in the "zone of indifference" are unquestionably acceptable to the worker, and therefore will not lead to his questioning of authority (p. 168-169). He also lists the critical functions of the informal organization as:

1. Serve as effective communication vehicles.
2. Serve as means of developing cohesion.
3. Provide for a way of protecting the individual and their personal value within the organization.

Barnard's ideas were based on cooperation within the organization between management and the worker. In order to succeed, the formal organization must be complemented by an informal organization to satisfy the individual's desire to remain independent, have self-respect, and maintain personal integrity.

Abraham Maslow, known as the Father of Humanistic Psychology, is most known for his hierarchy of needs theory and the concept of self-actualization. The hierarchy of needs is best shown in the form of a triangle—with physiological needs on the bottom, and progressing upward with safety and security at level 2, social needs at level 3, esteem needs at level 4, and self-actualization at the top level. According to Maslow, people must satisfy lower level needs before the upper level needs can be met (Maslow, 1998).

Maslow (1998) contends that individuals must do what they are intended to do or they will become dissatisfied. Self-actualization occurs when a person is able to fulfill his or her life goals. On the topic of self-actualization and its relationship to organizational management, Maslow states:

This is of course a circular relationship to some extent, i.e., given fairly o.k. people to begin with, in a fairly good organization, then work tends to improve the people. This tends to improve the industry, which in turn tends to improve the people involved, and so it goes. This is the simplest way of saying that proper management of the work lives of human beings, of the way in which they earn their living, can improve them and improve the world and in this sense be a utopian or revolutionary technique. (p. 1)

Another important figure in the development of the behavioral school of management theory was Douglas McGregor (Maslow, 1998). He coined the terms Theory X and Theory Y as sets of assumptions we hold about people. He based his theory on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. It is important to note that Theory X and Y are not management styles. Instead, they are assumptions about people—specifically workers.

Theory X states four specific ideas about people:

1. That the average person would prefer not to work than to work.



2. That managers and organizations must control, direct, and ensure adequate effort from the average person.
3. The average employee prefers direction and seeks security above all else in a job.
4. The average employee holds no internal ambition or need for greatness.

Theory Y holds these four ideas about people:

1. For the average person, work is as natural and desired as rest or play.
2. Most people will exercise self-control, display self-initiative, and actively seek responsibility when they feel committed to a set of objectives.
3. Commitment comes primarily not from fear but from rewards, especially intangible rewards like the feeling of achievement and self-actualization.
4. The average person has significant untapped capacity for creativity and ingenuity.

According to McGregor's theory, what management believes about employees in relation to Theory X or Theory Y guides their actions.

### *Myths of Leadership*

Leadership theories abound and have changed significantly with time. First, people thought that leaders were born instead of made or developed. The Great Man theory described leadership as a natural set of skills that only a select few were born with. Then came the Big Bang theory—which states that events make the leader. According to this line of thought, being in the right place at the right time and seizing

the opportunity matters most in determining who is to be deemed a great leader. (Bennis & Nanus, 1985)

Along with these theories came what Bennis and Nanus (1985) refer to as myths of leadership. These myths are:

1. *Leadership is a rare skill.* Great leaders may be rare, but everyone has leadership potential. Some lead in one capacity while not in every capacity. Some lead in one organization of which they are a member but not in others. For example, a person that is not in a leadership position at work may be an extremely effective leader in a club or organization of which he or she is a member.
2. *Leaders are born, not made.* Leadership can be learned. Leadership skills are not necessarily natural. Leaders can be developed as they learn and perfect specific skills that are applicable to their situation.
3. *Leaders are charismatic.* Some leaders do possess this trait, but most do not. Charisma may actually be the result of leadership rather than a requirement. As people accept someone as a leader, they want to be around them. The person in a leadership role is more likely to receive attention from others.
4. *Leadership exists only at the top of an organization.* This is not true – especially for large organizations. A large organization has several layers of leadership. Only some of these leaders are in formal leadership positions within the organization.

5. *The leader controls, directs, prods, manipulates.* “Leadership is not so much the exercise of power itself as the empowerment of others” (p. 224-225). Leaders should pull instead of push, inspire rather than command, set high expectations, and then reward and celebrate achievement.

### *Management vs. Leadership*

Begley (2001) describes traditional management as “a mechanistic, short-sighted, precedent-focused and context-constrained practice” (p. 354). In contrast, leadership focuses less on the organizational structures and more on the needs of the people. Hughes (1999) defines and separates the concepts of management and leadership in this way:

The task of running a complex operation is *administration*, a task with two dimensions. One dimension, embracing activities related to change and dynamism, is *leadership*. The other dimension, encompassing productive efforts to manage a status quo in which people can work comfortably, is *management*. (p. 28)

According to Hughes, leadership and management should not necessarily be looked at on a good-bad continuum. Instead, they are separate and equally important aspects of success within an organization. Both must be present as they are interrelated. Kotter (cited in Strike, 2004) relates management to order and consistency, but leadership to dealing with change.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) see a distinct difference between management and leadership. Speaking of managers they state, “They may excel in the ability to handle the daily routine, yet never question whether the routine should be done at all” (p.

21). While pointing out the differences between the two concepts, Bennis and Nanus believe that both are important:

“To manage” means “to bring about, to accomplish, to have charge of or responsibility for, to conduct.” “Leading” is “influencing, guiding in direction, course, action, opinion.” The distinction is crucial. *Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing.* The difference may be summarized as activities of vision and judgment—*effectiveness* versus activities of mastering routines—*efficiency*. (p. 21)

At least one prominent authority on leadership does not see a distinct line between management skills and leadership skills. Drucker (2001) contends that leadership has less to do with particular qualities or charisma, and more to do with performance. Work, responsibility, and trust help define the leader. An effective leader must think through, define, establish, and communicate the mission of the organization. He must also view leadership as a responsibility rather than a rank or position. He must strengthen those around him. And finally, he must earn the trust of those within and around the organization. In short, Drucker believes there are shared qualities in an effective leader and an effective manager.

### **Educational Leadership**

Schools are no different than other organizations in relation to management and leadership. Sergiovanni (1990) concedes that schools cannot function without competent management but believes that many school administrators do little beyond management. He calls these schools overmanaged and underled. Kotter (cited in Strike, 2004) makes the same claim about U.S. corporations.

In schools, leadership is often the main factor that determines the level of success for the organization (Bass, 1990). Schools do share some of the basic managerial requirements of other organizations that ensure stability, structure, reliability, competence, and purpose. They also face, however, some unique political realities that require unique leadership attributes. According to Sergiovanni (2000), schools belong to a diverse group of stakeholders that include parents and children, local businesses, churches, and other community groups. They must also interact with state and federal governmental agencies. Reaching consensus among all of these groups and working within governmental regulations requires a high level of political skill for the school leader.

Senge (2000) agrees that schools contend with a unique set of pressures that other institutions or organizations do not face. He states:

Schools are increasingly expected to compensate for the shifts in society and family that affect children: changes in family structure, rapidly shifting trends in television and popular culture, commercialism without end, poverty (and the inadequate nutrition and health care that go with it), violence, child abuse, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and incessant social upheaval. Struggling to keep up with these kinds of demands, school leaders continually place their institutions on the frontier of change. (p. 9-10)

In their meta-analysis of 70 studies involving 2894 schools, approximately 1.1 million students, and 14,000 teachers, Waters et al. (2003) found a “substantial relationship between leadership and student achievement” (p. 3). Their research produced a list of 21 leadership responsibilities, with a set of practices associated with each responsibility. Their research indicates that knowing what to do as a leader is not enough. A leader must also know how, when, and why to do it. Even leaders that are working hard and demonstrating competence in certain leadership responsibilities can

have a negative impact on the school. As Waters et al. (2003) state, “When leaders concentrate on the wrong school and/or classroom practices, or miscalculate the magnitude or ‘order’ of the change they are attempting to implement, they can negatively impact student achievement” (p. 5).

Hoyle (1983) identifies six vital skills for successful educational leadership in the twenty-first century. They include skills in visioning, stress management, personnel selection and professional growth of staff, instructional leadership, humanistic approaches, and communication. While there are certain leadership skills that seem to be necessary in schools like other organizations, Leithwood, et al. (2004) point out that different leadership traits may be necessary in different schools. Some types of schools require a top-down direct style while others operate effectively with more collaboration between leaders and followers. There are also differences depending on the age of students served in the schools. Elementary principals tend to be stronger in curricular knowledge, while secondary principals tend to rely on content specialists for this knowledge. Furthermore, small school leaders tend to have more direct contact and influence on teachers, while leaders of larger schools are more likely to rely on staff development and other indirect approaches to influence staff members.

As in other organizations, an important function of the school leader is to establish a shared vision. One of the keys to successful schooling is building common purposes and beliefs to unite all of the stakeholders in the school. This shared vision indicates to everyone what is important—what is of value within the organization (Sergiovanni, 1990). A shared vision is more than an idea according to Senge (1990). It is even more than an important idea. He describes it, instead, as a powerful force

that enlists buy-in from more than one person. Once a vision becomes shared by everyone within an organization it becomes a powerful force (Senge, 1990).

In their review of the research on educational leadership, Leithwood et al. (2004) concluded that leadership can play an important role in student learning, yet that role is often underestimated. Indicating the importance of leadership, they state, “The total (direct and indirect) effects of leadership on student learning account for about a quarter of total school effects” (p. 5). This impact is second only to the effect of direct instruction provided by the teacher. What makes the effect of the leader on student learning so hard to determine is its indirect nature. Hallinger and Heck (cited in Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000) indicate that studies of the direct effects of principals on student learning are often inconclusive, whereas studies that include other variables tend to report significant effects of leadership on learning. Reinforcing the indirect nature of a leader’s impact, Leithwood et al. (2004) point out that because leaders of all but the smallest schools spend most of their time with adults instead of students, they impact student learning through their influence on other people within the organization.

## **Principal Leadership**

### *History of the Principal Position*

Wilmore (2002) gives an overview of the history of the position of principal. In the earliest form of the position, the job was that of “principal teacher” (p. 4). This person was “a master teacher who also tended to the limited duties required to keep the school organized and operating efficiently” (p. 4). As one of the first positions to

appear in the field of educational administration, the history of the principalship is difficult to trace in detail. “In fact, the position appeared so many years ago that an accurate history of its development is somewhat lost in antiquity” (Kimbrough & Burkett, 1990, p. 1).

Once schools grew large enough to require multiple teachers, head teachers were appointed to manage various aspects of the school. Simultaneously, these head teachers continued with their teaching duties. Teaching principals came next as schools grew larger—especially in urban areas. This was a result of the feeling that someone needed to be in charge of the school. “The term *principal* was derived from *prince* and means first in rank, degree, importance, and authority” (Kimbrough & Burkett, 1990, p. 3). It is believed that a school in Cincinnati had the first appointed principal around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The administrative functions of the principal have become much more complex than the rudimentary management tasks faced by early principals.

### *Importance of Principal Leadership*

Research in the field of education has repeatedly established that the principal is the most important individual in successful schools where student achievement is high (Jackson & Davis, as cited in Lucas, 2003). Not only must the principal navigate the political landscape that is unique to schools, but he must also be an expert on the core technology of the school—which is teaching and learning—and must lead through collaborative leadership and decision making (Clark & Clark, as cited in Lucas, 2003). The ultimate success of the school as an organization is largely



determined by the knowledge, insight, commitment, and leadership of the building principal (Valentine, Clark, Hackmann, & Petzco, as cited in Lucas, 2003). Indeed, “Few educators and citizens will argue with the proposition that the principal of the school is the most important administrator in the American educational system” (Kimbrough & Burkett, 1990, p. xi). According to the research of Waters and Cameron (2006), however, not all strong principals have a positive effect on student academic achievement. In a number of cases where principals were rated as strong leaders by their teachers, the academic achievement of the students was below average.

Going back as far as 1983, when American schools were declared at-risk, research has indicated that the role played by the principal is one of the most important factors in determining the effectiveness of a school (Gullatt & Lofton, 1996). Gullatt and Lofton go further in stating that effective school principals play an active role in the instructional process and this has an impact on the achievement of students. Harris (2002) contends that effective leadership is widely accepted as being an important component in achieving school improvement and development. This holds true for schools all over the world.

### *Effective Leadership Traits of Principals*

As schools in America become more and more diverse, it is essential that principals listen to input from all stakeholders—including teachers, parents, and students. The voices of these constituents are often “drowned out by the experts,” according to Myrna Gantner and her colleagues (Lashway, 2003, p. 8). In their case

study of a Texas school, they found that the principal has a profound impact on school climate as a result of certain actions and beliefs. These include: promoting democratic participation, creating an inviting culture, building meaningful relationships, and acting ethically. Similarly, Gross and Shapiro (cited in Lashway, 2003, p. 8) contend that “leaders must balance accountability (legal obligations) against responsibility (concern for people).” According to their research, certain leadership behaviors help teachers negotiate the increasing demands of accountability for student learning. These leadership behaviors include protecting the best parts of the current curriculum and treating teacher concerns with respect and caring.

According to Byrnes and Baxter (2006), “Principals shoulder the monumental task of leadership in a complex world. Although rarely compared to the duties of the CEO of some of our familiar corporations, the principal’s role is often just as demanding and, some would argue, the stakes are just as high” (p. xi). They go on to state, “Research suggests the principal’s job is the most difficult in the school, and even in the school district” (p. 34). Principals are caught in the middle between the parents and teachers. They also have to balance the pressures from within the campus and from the central administration.

The principal’s roles and the leadership traits that go along with these changing roles have evolved over time. As indicated by Fullan (1993), it is essential that the principal broaden the leadership capacity of the school. Developing teacher leaders helps extend the leadership of the school beyond the principal’s chair. More can be accomplished in this atmosphere of collaboration and teamwork. This is part of the new work of the modern principal—that of building learning organizations.

The “Principal Do-Right” model is described by Senge (2000) as being built on the tenants of these four basic values:

1. Remain in unilateral control—never let them see you doubt or sweat.
2. Maximize winning and minimize losing—if you can’t win the confrontation, redefine the exchange as learning or negotiating.
3. Suppress negative feelings—negative vibes indicate a failure to inspire or motivate; personal anger or negative statements indicate a lack of control or incompetence.
4. Be as rational as possible—rational behavior is a sign of an educated person.

In contrast to the “Principal Do-Right” model, Senge (2000) proposes a new and more realistic model for success based on engagement, systems thinking, leading learning, and self-awareness. Engagement is the ability to mobilize people to solve difficult problems through facilitating conversations and learning. He describes systems thinking as the ability to recognize problems and identify the dynamics of complex systems. Leading learning involves building a learner-centered approach to all problems in the classroom and the school as a whole, where everything is based on student success and doing whatever it takes to reach that success. The final tenant, which is self-awareness, means knowing one’s impact on the system. It is important for the principal to evaluate whether their impact has strengthened or lessened with time.

The leadership traits of the principal are linked to student achievement. Sweeney (1982) conducted a study of schools in which student achievement was high and he identified the following factors among the leaders of these schools.

1. The principal emphasizes student achievement by being visible and involved in classrooms and instruction.
2. The principal is involved in instructional decisions and setting instructional strategies and methods.
3. The principal provides an orderly atmosphere that is conducive to learning.
4. The principal monitors student progress and evaluates progress toward academic goals.
5. The principal coordinates instructional programs to ensure they are working together to reach the campus goals and objectives.
6. The principal supports teachers and promotes professional growth of the staff.

Similarly, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) (as cited in Lashway, 2003) identified the following themes of effective school leadership:

1. Facilitating shared vision.
2. Sustaining a school culture conducive to student and staff learning.
3. Managing the organization for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. Collaborating with families and community members.
5. Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

6. Influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Another list of leadership responsibilities or traits for principals comes from the National Association of Elementary School Principals. In 2001, this organization's guide to professional development for principals included the importance of creating a dynamic learning community, setting high expectations, demanding content and instruction to ensure student success, using data to guide improvement, and actively engaging the community (Lashway, 2003).

One common leadership trait that is important for principals is the ability to build and maintain relationships. According to Bolman and Deal (as cited in Lucas, 2003), exemplary principals develop and maintain good relationships with the entire school community. Hoyle and Slater (2001) believe that administrators set a positive climate for an entire school when they are caring, compassionate, and show a good sense of humor.

#### *Principal as Instructional Leader*

The bureaucracy of the school grew to a point where policies, rules and paperwork became the focus of campus principals. Furthermore, societal problems evolved to help shift the responsibility from curriculum and instruction to management and operations of the campus (Wilmore, 2002). In the early 1980s, particularly after *A Nation at Risk* was released, there was yet another shift in educational priorities and reforms. The accountability movement began in earnest with an emphasis on high-stakes testing. In this era, "The role of the principal has transitioned

again from school manager to the school catalyst for success for all stakeholders” (Wilmore, 2002, p. 5). Furthermore, the principal has become the chief liaison to connect the school with all community resources. The principal is the “primary voice of the school, the champion of free and appropriate education for all students, and the chief proponent of the value of education in a democratic society. In other words, the principal becomes the main educational facilitator of the learning community” (Wilmore, 2002, p. 5).

Increasingly, the role of the principal is being defined as one of instructional leadership. This concept is different now than when it was first introduced in the 1980’s, when being an instructional leader meant being efficient and task-oriented as an autocratic manager. The current meaning of instructional leadership indicates one who is democratic and community-minded. This leader builds consensus around a vision and is focused on student learning and accountability for this learning. (Lashway, 2002a)

There is more to being an instructional leader in current times than ever before. As Lashway (2002b) states:

Initially, administrators qualified as instructional leaders simply by paying attention to instruction: setting curricular goals, monitoring lesson plans, and evaluating teachers. Today, instructional leaders immerse themselves in the “core technology” of teaching and learning, use data to make decisions, and align staff development with student learning needs. (p. 3)

Instructional leaders are focused on the task of ensuring that all students succeed in learning. According to the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) (as cited in Wilmore, 2002, p. 13-14), the standards for promoting the academic and overall success of all students in a school are:

1. Facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school or district vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2. Advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. Ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. Collaborating with community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5. Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. Understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.
7. Substantial, sustained, standards-based experiences in real settings that are planned and guided cooperatively by university and school district personnel for graduate credit.

#### *Traits of an Effective Instructional Leader*

According to Gullatt and Lofton (1996), there are several factors that determine whether a principal is an effective instructional leader. The principal must possess a substantial knowledge base in curriculum and instruction, provide vision and direction for the school, and promote a positive teaching and learning environment. He or she must also be an effective communicator and motivator, and maintain high expectations for everyone within the school. According to the Institute for

Educational Leadership (as cited in Lashway, 2003), these leaders of student learning must know both academic content and pedagogical techniques. They must also work to strengthen the skills of teachers, use and analyze data in the decision making process, bring together the efforts of all stakeholders to increase student achievement, and possess the leadership skills to accomplish these tasks.

Finally, Gullatt and Lofton (1996) indicate that effective instructional leaders are people oriented. They cannot work in isolation and seclusion from the daily life of the school environment. Successful leaders network with other principals on a frequent basis, both formally and informally.

### **Junior High Schools and Middle Schools**

#### *History of Junior Highs and Middle Schools*

In response to high dropout rates, schools changed from a system in which the educational institutions were divided into two phases—eight years of elementary and four years of secondary schooling. This shift occurred in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the creation of the first junior high schools. Junior high schools were judged to be inadequate by the early 1960s because they had turned into “miniature high schools” (Brown & Anfara, 2002).

As cited in Brown and Anfara (2002), in 1965 The National Education Agency (NEA) defined a middle school as, “the school which stands academically between elementary and high school, is housed separately (ideally in a building designed especially for this purpose), and offers at least three years of schooling beginning with either grade five or six” (p. 4). The National Middle School Association



(NMSA) gives a broader definition of middle schools—including those with grades 6–8, 5–8, 5–7, and 7–8. The NMSA focuses on the fact that these schools should be “based on developmental needs (social and academic) of young adolescents, organized by interdisciplinary teams, with flexible organizational structures, using varied learning and teaching approaches” (p. 4). Therefore, the structure and philosophy of the school defines it as either a middle school or junior high – not necessarily the specific grades the school serves.

According to Erb (as cited in Lucas, 2003), there are multiple elements of middle level reform. All of these levels “are intended to address, in a developmentally appropriate way, the academic, affective, and social needs of early adolescents in a way that leads to broad, positive outcomes” (p. 3). This simply reinforces the notion that for middle level education to be effective, it must be about addressing the needs of the learner in an age-appropriate manner.

### *Junior High and Middle School Principals*

As in all schools, the principal of a middle school is critical to the success of the organization and its students. Jackson and Davis (cited in Lucas, 2003), believe that the principal has the most potential to positively impact the school. This impact is most notable in the areas of academic improvement and student performance. Clark and Clark (cited in Lucas, 2003) state:

Because middle schools are large and complex organizations, the role of principal leadership is critical in initiating and sustaining such reforms; thus, principals must possess steady commitment to the vision of the school, as well as the ability to develop and maintain a school culture favorable to continuous improvement. (p. 3)

They go further in describing the necessity for middle school principals to be experts in early adolescent education. The middle level principal's knowledge in this area makes it possible to facilitate the vision and processes necessary in the education of early adolescent students. Middle school principals "should not only be conversant with the historical and philosophical underpinnings of middle level education, but also have a clear picture of the potential of effective middle schools" (Clark & Clark, as cited in Lucas, 2003, p. 3).

According to Farmer, Gould, Herring, Linn, and Theobald (1995), one reason middle school principals have a unique task is because their students differ so much from those at elementary and high schools. Students in a middle school are reaching puberty, but certainly not simultaneously. "These are meteoric but uneven years of growth in every dimension for children" (p. 10). Middle school principals must be able to lead all of the school's stakeholders to the fulfillment of their vision, manage the daily tasks and operations of the campus, understand curriculum and instruction and guide its implementation, build a team of teachers, and foster school-community relations.

Brown and Anfara (2002) indicate that middle school principals require a particular set of qualities because of the unique nature of the students they serve. These principals are responsive to the changes that occur in the students as they move from childhood to their adolescent years. They see the challenges associated with this change as rewarding. They also understand and appreciate the struggle the students are going through and respond with empathy instead of judgment. They avoid taking

things personally as their students awkwardly learn how interact with adults. Furthermore, middle school principals must recruit teachers that are student-centered and understanding of middle school students. The principal and teachers must be caring and nurturing in these transitional years.

### **Measuring Leadership**

There are many instruments designed to measure leadership. One well-known measurement tool is the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). According to Hoy and Miskel (2001), it is probably the most well-known leader research tool to students of educational leadership. A newer leadership assessment is the Leadership Practices Inventory, developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b). It has become “one of the most widely used 360-degree leadership assessment instruments available” (p. 16).

#### *Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ)*

Born from the Personnel Research Board of the Ohio State University in the 1950s, the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) quickly became a widely used instrument aimed at measuring leader behaviors rather than traits. The two major factors measured by the LBDQ are labeled initiating structure and consideration.

Initiating structure refers to the leader’s behavior in delineating the relationship between himself and members of the workgroup, and in endeavoring to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure. Consideration refers to behavior indicative of

friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in the relationship between the leader and the members of his staff. (Halpin, cited in Hanson, 1991, p. 187)

### *Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)*

Kouzes and Posner (2002) identified a set of essential human relations skills that leaders should possess and use to promote success within organizations. These research-based practices were consistently found to increase the overall effectiveness of organizations of diverse types. The practices are described in five tenants of exemplary leadership—Modeling the Way, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Challenging the Process, Enabling Others to Act, and Encouraging the Heart. Kouzes and Posner (2003b) developed the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) as an instrument to measure these five leadership practices.

### *Modeling the Way*

When leaders demonstrate the guiding principles and the shared vision of the organization through their personal thoughts and actions, others within the group are likely to act similarly. Kouzes and Posner refer to this practice as *Modeling the Way*. The first step for a leader is finding his or her own voice—using words guided by personal beliefs and values rather than the words of someone else. This strong commitment to beliefs and a clear set of values lends credibility to the leader. (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a)

When the leader of an organization models the behaviors that are expected of everyone within the organization, commitment to excellence is possible (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Words are not enough to inspire goal focus and achievement at the

highest levels. About *Modeling the Way*, Kouzes and Posner (2002) state, “Eloquent speeches about common values, however, aren’t nearly enough. Leaders’ deeds are far more important than their words when determining how serious they really are about what they say. Words and deeds must be consistent” (p. 14).

### *Inspiring a Shared Vision*

Through their research, Kouzes and Posner (2003a) found that people are not willing to follow someone that is not forward-looking. Leaders must have a vision of the future and this vision must inspire others to see the ultimate possibilities of success for the organization. Kouzes and Posner (2002) define the concept by writing:

Leaders *inspire a shared vision*. They gaze across the horizon of time, imagine the attractive opportunities that are in store when they and their constituents arrive at a distant destination. Leaders have a desire to make something happen, to change the way things are, to create something that no one else has ever created before. In some ways, leaders live their lives backward. They see pictures in their mind’s eye of what the results will look like before they’ve started their project, much as an architect draws a blueprint or an engineer builds a model. Their clear image of the future pulls them forward. Yet visions seen only by leaders are insufficient to create an organized movement or a significant change in a company. A person with no constituents is not a leader, and people will not follow until they accept a vision as their own. Leaders cannot command commitment, only inspire it. (p. 15)

It is important for a leader to inspire a shared vision in their constituents. A leader’s passion for the organization’s work helps inspire a shared vision because people are intrinsically motivated by a passion or cause (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a). “Leaders breathe life into the hopes and dreams of others and enable them to see the exciting possibilities that the future holds” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 16).

### *Challenging the Process*

This practice stresses that the leader must constantly search for opportunities to challenge the status quo. As Kouzes and Posner (2003a, p. 174) state, “Leadership experiences are, indeed, voyages of discovery and adventures of a lifetime.” By seeking, developing, and encouraging innovation—leaders find new ways to improve the organization and rise to challenges along the way.

Warren Bennis writes that ‘leaders learn by leading, and they learn best by leading in the face of obstacles. As weather shapes mountains, problems shape leaders. Difficult bosses, lack of vision and virtue in the executive suite, circumstances beyond their control, and their own mistakes have been the leaders’ basic curriculum.’ In other words, leaders are learners. They learn from their failures as well as their successes. (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 17)

Effective leaders are willing to take risks to make improvements. This risk taking strategy is important because as expectations rise and the variables that govern success change, people and organizations cannot keep doing things the same way and be successful in the process. Proactive leaders perform better and the people around do as well (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a).

Leaders often have to be risk takers when pursuing a leadership role in the first place, and this trait continues to be important once in the role. Leadership opportunities must first be embraced—and once the challenge is accepted there is an opportunity to lead others to success. As Kouzes and Posner (2002) state, “Leaders are pioneers—people who are willing to step out into the unknown. They search for opportunities to innovate, grow, and improve” (p. 17). Once a person becomes a leader, their main role is to identify good ideas and facilitate the implementation of these ideas.

### *Enabling Others to Act*

The leadership practice of facilitating collaboration and team building within the organization is known as *Enabling Others to Act*. Kouzes and Posner (2002) state:

Exemplary leaders *enable others to act*. They foster collaboration and build trust. This sense of teamwork goes far beyond a few direct reports or close confidants. They engage all those who must make the project work—and in some way, all who must live with the results. (p. 18)

Every stakeholder becomes actively involved and an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust develops.

In this environment, leadership becomes a true team effort. Enabling others requires people within the organization to have more discretion than authority and more information as well. In this scenario, they are very likely to be energetic about producing extraordinary results. By empowering others, the leader's influence actually increases—rather than decreases as insecure leaders may be inclined to believe. This phenomenon is a result of the fact that power is not a fixed sum. In other words, giving power to others does not decrease the leader's power.

As Kouzes and Posner (2003a) found in their research, extraordinary things are never accomplished by individuals alone. Instead, it always takes a team effort for this exceptional achievement in any endeavor. When leaders make it possible for others to do good work, these people gain power and ownership develops. Expectations increase along with productivity. When leaders establish an environment where people feel strong, capable, and committed—greater achievement is possible (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). “Grand dreams don’t become significant realities through the

actions of a single person. Leadership is a team effort” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p.18).

### *Encouraging the Heart*

Finally, *Encouraging the Heart* is the leadership practice of celebrating the successes of individuals within the group and those of the organization as a whole. “Leaders *encourage the heart* of their constituents to carry on. Genuine acts of caring uplift the spirits and draw people forward” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 19). Leaders promote people’s heroic feelings through encouragement. This positive form of feedback keeps people within the organization engaged and focused on goals—even lofty goals that require intense work to accomplish (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a). It is extremely important for a leader to show appreciation for people’s contributions, and this leads to a culture of celebration. But it is important to note that celebrations of success have to be genuine. Ceremonies and recognitions are only important to honorees if the leader is sincere (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

## **Accountability in Texas Schools**

### *History of Texas Accountability System*

Statewide testing began in Texas during the 1979-1980 school year with the Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS) test. This test was initially intended as a diagnostic tool for individual students. The test results provided data to help school personnel address educational weaknesses for individual students. Entire programs could also be evaluated and adjustments could be made to improve the educational



process for all students. The Texas Educational Assessment of Minimal Skills (TEAMS) replaced TABS in 1984-1985. Like the previous testing program, TEAMS tests were given in the subjects of reading, writing, and math. Also like TABS, the TEAMS tests were designed to measure minimum basic skills in these areas (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 1996).

In 1990-1991, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test was implemented. This marked several significant changes in the Texas testing program. Instead of testing basic knowledge as previous assessments had done, the TAAS test was designed to measure higher order thinking skills. Assessments were also given in more subjects and at more grade levels. Most significantly, the testing program gradually became more about accountability and less about diagnostic tools for individual students and educational programs. By 1993, tests were being used almost exclusively to hold campuses and districts accountable for student learning (TEA, 1996).

From 1993 through 2002, Texas rated schools through an accountability system put in place as a result of statutes enacted by the Texas Legislature in 1993. The system was similar to the latest version that began in 2003 with the introduction of a new battery of tests. The new assessments, called the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), tests students on more subjects and in more grade levels. The tests are also considered to be more rigorous than the previous assessments, as they require even more of the higher order thinking skills than ever before (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2005a).

Additionally, the latest accountability system calls for higher standards from year to year. For example, from 2004 to 2005 the state accountability standards increased in the following ways:

- A higher student passing standard for TAKS tests.
- An increase in the rigor of the dropout rate to achieve the Academically Acceptable rating.
- The use of the new SDAA II assessment results in the rating system, which will include more special education students in the system. (SDAA II is the newest version of the State Developed Alternative Assessment test for special education students. It is more rigorous than the old version.)

The Texas Education Agency formed committees that included an array of educators, school board members, business and community representatives, professional organizations, and legislative representatives from across the state. Input from these groups then went to the commissioner of education for consideration before final changes in the system were put in place (TEA, 2005a).

#### *Current Texas Accountability System*

The four base indicators used to rate districts and campuses are: student performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), student performance on the State Developed Alternative Assessment II (SDAA II), the Completion Rate II for the graduating class of the previous year, and the Annual Dropout Rate for grades 7 and 8. (TEA, 2005a)

As of the 2004-2005 school year, the subjects assessed through TAKS testing are reading/English language arts (ELA), writing, social studies, mathematics, and science. In each grade level, only selected subjects are tested through TAKS. These tests are administered as shown in Table 1 in middle schools/junior high schools.

**TABLE 1. TAKS Tests Administered in Middle School Grades, 2004-2005**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Grades Tested</b>
Reading/ELA	6, 7, and 8
Writing	7
Social Studies	8
Mathematics	6, 7, and 8
Science *	8

\* Science added in 2006, but will not count toward campus and district rating until 2008.

SDAA II tests are administered in Reading/ELA, writing, and mathematics in the same grades as TAKS. There are no SDAA II tests in social studies or science. For these subjects, schools have the option of giving a local developed alternative assessment (LDAA) to students that qualify for special education and are unable to take TAKS (TEA, 2005a).

As part of the Texas Education Agency's guidelines (TEA, 2005a), Completion Rate II is calculated by determining the percentage of students that started ninth grade four years ago and have either graduated or are still enrolled in school. Middle schools and junior high schools are not impacted as a campus by this component of

the accountability system because it only applies to completion of high school. However, Annual Dropout Rate is calculated based on the number of official dropouts in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, therefore this component is a part of the campus rating for middle schools and junior high schools. The requirements for each rating category are explained in Table 2 and an overview of the entire system is found in Table 3.

**TABLE 2. Requirements for Each Rating Category (as Applicable to Middle Schools) (TEA, 2005a)**

	<b>Academically Acceptable</b>	<b>Recognized</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
<b>Base Indicators</b>			
<b>Spring 2005 TAKS</b> - All students And each student group meeting minimum size: - African American - Hispanic - White - Econ. Disadvantaged	Meets each standard: - Reading/ELA.....50% - Writing.....50% - Social Studies..... 50% - Mathematics ..... 35% - Science ..... 25% OR meets Required Improvement	Meets 70% standard for each subject OR Meets 65% floor and Required Improvement	Meets 90% standard for each subject
<b>Spring 2005 SDAA II</b> All students (if meets minimum size criteria)	Meets 50% standard (Met ARD Expectations)	Meets 70% standard (Met ARD Expectations)	Meets 90% standard (Met ARD Expectations)
<b>Annual Dropout Rate 2003-04</b> - All students And each student group meeting minimum size: - African American - Hispanic - White - Econ. Disadvantaged	Meets 1.0% standard OR Meets Required Improvement	Meets 0.7% standard OR Meets 0.9% floor and Required Improvement	Meets 0.2% standard

TABLE 2. Continued

	Academically Acceptable	Recognized	Exemplary
<b>Additional Provisions</b>			
<b>Exceptions</b>	Applied if district/campus would be <i>Academically Unacceptable</i> due to not meeting the <i>Academically Acceptable</i> criteria on up to 3 test measures.	Exceptions cannot be used to move to a rating of <i>Recognized</i> .	Exceptions cannot be used to move to a rating of <i>Exemplary</i> .

TABLE 3. Overview of 2005 System Components (as Applicable to Middle Schools) (TEA, 2005a)

	TAKS	SDAA II	Dropout Rate
<b>Definition</b>	TAKS results (gr. 3-11) summed across grades by subject.	A single (gr. 3-11) indicator calculated as the number of tests meeting ARD expectations (summed across grades and subjects) divided by the number of SDAA II tests.	Gr. 7 and 8 official dropouts as a percent of total gr. 7 and 8 students who were in attendance at any time during the school year.
<b>Rounding</b>	Whole Numbers	Whole Numbers	One Decimal
<b>Standards: Exemplary Recognized Acceptable</b>	Ex: All subjects $\geq 90\%$ Re: All subjects $\geq 70\%$ Acc: Rdg/W/SS $\geq 50\%$ Mathematics $\geq 35\%$	Ex: $\geq 90\%$ Re: $\geq 70\%$ Acc: $\geq 50\%$	Ex: $\leq 0.2\%$ Re: $\leq 0.7\%$ Acc: $\leq 1.0\%$
<b>Mobility Adjustment (Accountability Subset)</b>	Campus ratings: results for students enrolled in the campus in the fall and tested in the same campus.		None
<b>Subjects</b>	Reading Writing Mathematics Social Studies	Reading Writing Mathematics	N/A
<b>Student Groups</b>	All Students & Groups: African American Hispanic White Econ. Disadvantaged	All Students Only	All Students & Groups: African American Hispanic White Econ. Disadvantaged

TABLE 3. Continued

	TAKS	SDAA II	Dropout Rate
<b>Minimum Size Criteria</b>			
<b>All</b>	No minimum size requirement	30 or more tests	≥ 5 dropouts AND ≥ 10 students
<b>Groups</b>	30/10%/50	N/A	≥ 5 dropouts AND 30/10%/50
<b>Required Improvement (RI)</b>			
<b>Actual Change</b>	2005 minus 2004 performance	N/A	2003-04 rate minus 2002-03 rate
<b>RI</b>	Gain needed to reach standard in 2 years	N/A	Decline needed to reach standard in 2 years
<b>Use</b>	Move up to <i>Acceptable</i> and <i>Recognized</i>	N/A	Move up to <i>Acceptable</i> and <i>Recognized</i>
<b>Floor (Recognized)</b>	At least 65%	N/A	≤ 0.9%
<b>Minimum size</b>	Meets minimum size in current year and has ≥ 10 students tested in prior year.	N/A	Meets minimum size in current year and has ≥ 10 7 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> grade students the prior year.
<b>Exceptions</b>	After application of RI, this provision may be applied if the campus would be <i>Unacceptable</i> solely due to not meeting the <i>Acceptable</i> criteria on up to 3 assessment measures.		N/A
<b>Use</b>	To move up to <i>Acceptable</i>		N/A
<b>Floor</b>	No more than 5 percentage points below <i>Acceptable</i> stand.		N/A

For most components of the system, several groups of students are evaluated to determine the rating of a campus or district. These include All Students and the following student groups—African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged. Groups that do not meet a minimum size requirement are not used to calculate a campus or district rating. While the All Students group is always evaluated

as a part of the campus rating, the other student groups must meet the following size criteria.

- Any student group with fewer than 30 students is not evaluated.
- If there are 30 to 49 students within the student group and the student group comprises at least 10% of All Students, it is evaluated.
- If there are at least 50 students within the student group, it is evaluated.
- Student group size is calculated subject by subject. For this reason the number of student groups evaluated will sometimes vary. For example, an elementary school with grades 3, 4, and 5 tested may have enough Hispanic students to be evaluated on reading and mathematics, but not enough to be evaluated on writing (tested in grade 4 only) or science (tested in grade 5 only) (TEA, 2005a).

#### *Federal Accountability System and Texas*

Public Law (107-110), more commonly known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), was signed into law in January 2002. It is a reauthorization and amendment of the federal programs established under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). As a single part of this Act, all public school districts, campuses, and states are evaluated for AYP—or Adequate Yearly Progress (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2005b).

The Texas AYP Plan was approved at the Federal level in 2004, and is described in Table 4.

**TABLE 4. 2005 AYP Indicators (TEA, 2005b)**

Area	Standard	
<b>Reading/Language Arts</b> 2004-05 tests (TAKS, SDAA II, LDAA, and RPTE in Grades 3-8 & 10) All students and each student group that meets minimum size requirements: - African American - Hispanic - White - Econ. Disadvantaged - Special Education - Limited English Proficient	<b>Performance Standard: 53%</b> % counted as proficient on test* for students enrolled the full academic year subject to the Federal 5% cap	<b>Performance Improvement:</b> 10% decrease in percent not proficient on test* <i>and</i> any improvement on the other measure (Graduation Rate or Attendance Rate)
	<b>Participation Standard: 95%</b> Participation in the assessment program for students enrolled on the date of testing (no more than 5% of students absent)	<b>Average Participation Rate:</b> 95% participation based on combined 2003-04 and 2004-05 assessment data
<b>Mathematics</b> 2004-05 tests (TAKS, SDAA II, LDAA, and LAT in grades 3-8 & 10) All students and each student group that meets minimum size requirements (see above)	<b>Performance Standard: 42%</b> % counted as proficient on test* for students enrolled the full academic year subject to the Federal 5% cap	<b>Performance Improvement:</b> 10% decrease in percent not proficient on test* <i>and</i> any improvement on the other measure (Graduation Rate or Attendance Rate)
	<b>Participation Standard: 95%</b> Participation in the assessment program for students enrolled on the date of testing (no more than 5% of students absent)	<b>Average Participation Rate:</b> 95% participation based on combined 2003-04 and 2004-05 assessment data
<b>Other Indicator**</b> All students <b>Graduation Rate</b> Class of 2004 <b>Attendance Rate</b> 2003-04	<b>Graduation Rate Standard: 70% or any improvement.</b> Graduation Rate for high schools, combined elementary/secondary schools offering grade 12, and districts offering grade 12	<b>Attendance Rate Standard: 90% or any improvement.</b> Attendance Rate for elementary schools, middle/junior high schools, combined elementary/secondary schools not offering grade 12, and districts not offering grade 12

\* Student passing standard on TAKS. No more than 5% of students in the district's participation denominator can be counted as proficient based on meeting ARD expectations on 1) SDAA II for students tested below enrolled grade level, or 2) LDAA. Results for the RPTE are counted based on number of years in U.S. schools.

\*\* Student groups are not required to meet the Graduation Rate or Attendance Rate standards; however, they may be required to show improvement on the Graduation Rate or Attendance Rate as part of performance improvement for Reading/Language Arts or Mathematics.



According to the Texas Education Agency (2005b), the plan calls for all students to be tested on one of the following assessments:

- Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in the subjects of Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics;
- State-Developed Alternative Assessment II (SDAA II) in the subjects of Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics;
- Locally-Determined Alternate Assessment (LDAA) for students exempted from the TAKS and SDAA II by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee in the subjects of Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics;
- Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE) for recent immigrant limited English proficient (LEP) students who were exempted in Reading/Language Arts by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC);
- Linguistically Accommodated Testing (LAT) of the TAKS or SDAA II Mathematics assessments for recent immigrant LEP students who were exempted by the LPAC.

As well as the standards measured on the assessments mentioned above, districts and campuses are accountable for a participation rate that is determined based on the number of students that are actually tested divided by the number of students enrolled. And, a final measure for middle schools/junior high schools is their attendance rate (TEA, 2005b).

The increasing pressure of accountability is a significant cause in the shift of roles and responsibilities for school administrators. As schools push for ever-higher standards, they are simultaneously struggling to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population. Furthermore, they are dealing with many other issues that were not around in the past. The traditional roles and responsibilities of school administration, therefore, seem less relevant today (Lashway, 2002a).

### **Summary**

In summarizing the topics of leadership and educational leadership it is important to note that in all organizations, including educational institutions, leadership is important to success. While there are distinct differences between schools and other organizations, there are also common leadership threads among all enterprises. As indicated by Fullan (2002), “When I compared leaders from successful educational organizations with those from successful businesses, I found similar traits between the two groups” (p. 15).

Weller (2004) concludes that effective leaders are results-oriented, they plan for change, and they develop a vision for what the organization should be. Furthermore, they are people-oriented and emphasize teamwork. Mintzberg (as cited in Weller, 2004) indicates that effective leaders motivate and influence others in the pursuit of the common vision. Erlandson (1976) states, “Leadership perhaps is best defined as the interpersonal process by which the goals of a group or organization are defined and pursued” (p. 22).

On the topic of principal leadership, it is clear that principals must possess certain skills and knowledge to do their jobs effectively. The Stanford Educational Leadership Institute (as cited in Hale & Rollins, 2006), found that the three important aspects of the principal's job are: understanding and supporting teachers, overseeing the delivery of curriculum to promote student learning, and transforming schools into effective organizations through effective teaching and learning for all students.

The literature on junior high schools and middle schools stresses that they are unique institutions that require specific leadership skills and knowledge. This is largely due to the age of their students. San Antonio (2006) writes:

Early adolescents are naturally broadening their focus from a family-oriented context to school-, peer-, and community-oriented contexts. The middle grades come with new challenges and opportunities: managing lockers, changing classes, negotiating relationships with more teachers, using more advanced technology, and choosing from a wider range of after-school activities." (p. 9)

Weller (2004) points out that middle school aged students are very different from elementary and high school students. The middle school is a transitional school, so different challenges are faced by the administrators and teachers at this level.

Measuring leadership is important to the personal growth of leaders as well as to the organization itself. The work of Kouzes and Posner (2002) and the development of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), provides five specific practices of effective leaders. These practices are Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart.

Finally, accountability in Texas schools is increasing the pressure on school leaders to improve student learning. As instructional leaders of the campus,

principals have a significant impact on student achievement. As accountability standards have risen, effective leadership has become increasingly important. As pointed out by Leithwood and Riehl (as cited in Hale & Rollins, 2006), “Leadership has significant effects on student learning, second only to the effects of the quality of curriculum and teachers’ instruction” (p. 7). Focusing on student achievement, Hoyle, English, and Steffey (1998) state, “Successful school administrators put in place instructional systems that combine research findings about learning, curriculum, instructional strategies, and instructional time, as well as advanced electronic technologies and other resources to maximize student learning” (p. 85). In summarizing the importance of principal leadership, Ogden and Germinario (as cited in Weller, 2004) state:

Leadership is the most important role of the principal. In case after case, it has been demonstrated that it was the principal who has made the most significant difference in the transformation of the school from a loose collection of individual classrooms to an effective connected school with a shared mission and successful student outcomes. (p. 35)

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected site-based decision making (SBDM) committee members of middle schools in Region 5 Education Service Center (ESC), Texas. Data were collected to determine the perceived leadership practices of middle school principals in this region by surveying the principals and selected SBDM committee members on their campuses. The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) survey instrument was used for determining leadership practices and a researcher-developed instrument was used to gather demographic data. Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports were used to determine student performance for each campus.

This study addresses the following three research questions.

1. Is there a relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected SBDM committee members of middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas, as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b)?
2. Are there differences in the responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?

3. Do selected demographic variables impact responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?

In answering the first research question, the LPI was used to investigate the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected SBDM committee members of middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas. Student performance data were obtained from the AEIS reports of each campus. Correlations between LPI scores of respondents and the percentage of all TAKS tests passed were used to determine the relationship between these two variables. Correlations were performed for total LPI scores and for each of the 5 practices measured by the instrument.

In answering the second research question, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted using SPSS software to determine if there were differences between the responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in the middle schools in this study. Mean LPI scores of principals were compared to mean LPI scores of observers. As in answering Question 1, total LPI scores as well as scores for each of the five practices measured by the instrument were studied.

The third research question was answered using data from the LPI as well as data from the researcher-developed questionnaire. LPI scores of all respondents were analyzed to determine if selected demographic variables impacted responses on the survey. The researcher-developed questionnaire asked each respondent to rate the overall leadership of each principal. Principals and observers were studied as two

separate groups using the data from this questionnaire item to determine if selected demographic variables impacted responses within each group.

This chapter is presented in four basic sections:

1. Population
2. Instrumentation
3. Data Collection Procedures
4. Data Analysis

### **Population**

There are 35 middle schools in the 30 public school districts in Region 5 ESC. Each of these campuses house a consecutive combination of two or more grade levels including grades 5 through 8. Some of the campuses are called junior high schools instead of middle schools, without regard to the technical differences between the two. The principal and selected members of the SBDM from each of these middle schools were included in the study.

### **Instrumentation**

Two different versions of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b), were used to collect data on leadership practices. The LPI questionnaire exhibits five exemplary leadership practices as identified through a ten point Likert scale. This questionnaire is delivered in two formats, LPI-Self (Appendix A) was given to the principals in the study and LPI-Observer (Appendix

B) was given to the selected site-based decision making committee members. The LPI is one of the most widely used leadership assessment instruments, with over 250,000 leaders and almost 1 million observers having taken the surveys (Kouzes & Posner, 2003b). Permission to use the LPI for this research project was granted by Dr. Barry Posner (Appendix C).

The LPI has internal reliability as measured by Cronbach's Alpha with all scales above the .75 level. Instruments with reliability of .60 or higher are considered reliable. Table 5 shows the reliability of each section of the LPI as measured by Cronbach's Alpha.

**TABLE 5. Reliability Coefficients for the LPI**

<b>Leadership Practice</b>	<b>Self</b>	<b>Observers (All)</b>	<b>Manager</b>	<b>Direct Report</b>	<b>Co-Worker</b>	<b>Others</b>
<b>Challenge</b>	.80	.89	.89	.90	.88	.88
<b>Inspire</b>	.87	.92	.92	.92	.91	.91
<b>Enable</b>	.75	.88	.86	.89	.87	.88
<b>Model</b>	.77	.88	.86	.90	.87	.87
<b>Encourage</b>	.87	.92	.92	.93	.92	.93

According to Kouzes and Posner (2003b), the LPI was developed by writing a series of behavioral statements describing leadership practices. These statements were modified, included, or discarded throughout the lengthy process of development. Leadership behaviors are scored using a frequency rating of 1 through 10—with 1 representing that the leader almost never does what is described in the statement, and 10 representing that he or she almost always does what is described in the statement.



Recent validation of the LPI includes many cases and studies. Knab (as cited in Kouzes & Posner, 2000) reports that principals from national Blue Ribbon schools scored consistently higher on the LPI than did principals from non-Blue Ribbon schools. Also cited in Kouzes and Posner (2000), Gunter found employee commitment levels were significantly related to LPI scores. The LPI has been used to gather data for over 200 academic studies and master's theses. Kouzes and Posner (2003b) refer to the strict requirements regarding validity and reliability that academic institutions use when determining whether or not an instrument can be used in research.

As an addendum to the LPI-Self and LPI-Observer, a researcher-developed questionnaire was included to obtain demographic information for each respondent. This questionnaire was also delivered in two formats—one for the principal (Appendix D) and one for the observer (Appendix E).

Data for student performance were collected from the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) developed by the Texas Education Agency. The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports for each school in the study provided data that assess student performance on state assessments and campus/district ratings.

### **Data Collection**

Packets were mailed to the principals of the 35 middle school campuses in the Region 5 Education Service Center area on May 2, 2005. Each packet contained the LPI-Self with a demographic questionnaire to be completed by the principal. Also included in each packet was a large sealed envelope containing 5 copies of the LPI-Observer survey instrument with demographic questionnaires. The packet included a

cover letter to the principal (Appendix F) with instructions to give this sealed envelope to the chair of the campus site-based decision making committee or designee for distribution to selected committee members. The cover letter to each principal also explained the purpose of the study and contained an assurance that the responses would remain confidential. A similar cover letter addressed to each site-based decision committee chair (Appendix G), and an information sheet (Appendix H) were also included. The requested return date for the surveys was May 20, 2005.

By May 20, 2005, only 14 principals and 31 observers had returned their surveys. An email was sent to all principals in the study asking for their participation and stating that additional surveys could be sent if the originals had been misplaced. By June 20, 2005, completed surveys from 3 additional principals and 11 additional observers had been returned.

Because of this low return rate, an additional mailing was conducted on August 30, 2005, with a requested return date of September 23, 2005. From this mailing and reminder phone calls, 8 additional principal surveys and 33 observer surveys were received. Hurricane Rita struck the Southeast Texas coast on Saturday, September 24, 2005. Most of the schools in Region 5 ESC were closed due to evacuation by the preceding Thursday. The storm devastated the region and displaced many residents, with schools remaining closed for two weeks or longer in most cases. For this reason, data collection was suspended until the end of the school year.

On May 12, 2006, surveys were faxed to the remaining schools in a final attempt to collect data. Only 1 principal and 1 observer returned surveys as a result of this last

request for responses. By June 6, 2006, usable data had been collected for 26 schools out of the possible 35, for a campus return rate of 74.28 %.

### **Data Analysis**

Upon completion of the data collection, the aggregate response data were statistically computed using the SPSS statistical software, analyzed, and interpreted. Appropriate tests were used to determine possible relationships between leadership practices and student achievement. The data were descriptively interpreted with the use of numerical and graphic techniques and appropriate measures of central tendency and variability were used. Tables and figures were utilized to report the research data and results of statistical tests. These tables and figures include information relating to the research questions. The analysis and interpretation of data follows the principles as described in *Educational Research: An Introduction* (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 2002).

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected site-based decision making (SBDM) committee members of middle schools in Region 5 Education Service Center (ESC), Texas. Data were collected to determine the perceived leadership practices of middle school principals in this region by surveying the principals and selected SBDM committee members on their campuses.

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) survey instrument was used for determining leadership practices and a researcher-developed instrument was used to gather demographic data. Furthermore, state Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports were used to determine student performance for each campus. With accountability issues and student achievement at the forefront of public education in Texas and the nation as a whole, it is increasingly important to determine what factors, including leadership practices, impact student performance.

#### **Procedures and Presentation**

Survey packets were mailed to the principals and selected site-based decision making (SBDM) committee members of the 35 middle school campuses in the Region 5 Education Service Center area. Each packet contained the LPI-Self survey with a demographic questionnaire to be completed by the principal and five LPI-

Observer surveys with demographic questionnaires to be completed by SBDM committee members. After almost 3 weeks, only 14 principals and 31 observers had returned their surveys. E-mail reminders prompted 3 additional principal surveys and 11 additional observer surveys to be returned within 4 weeks.

Because of the low return rate, a second mailing was conducted. This mailing and reminder phone calls gathered 8 additional principals and 33 observer surveys. After a substantial delay as a result of Hurricane Rita striking the Southeast Texas coast, a final attempt was made to collect data by faxing surveys to schools that had not responded. Only 1 principal and 1 observer returned surveys as a result of this request. After more than a year of data collection, usable data had been collected for 26 schools out of the possible 35, for a campus return rate of 74.28 %.

The main survey instrument in this study was the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b). The instrument comes in two versions—LPI-Self and LPI-Observer. Both versions use a 10-point Likert-type scale with 30 total statements. The statements are in 5 groups of 6 questions each (Table 6) measuring each of the 5 leadership practices identified by Kouzes and Posner. Each practice has a minimum score of 6 and a maximum score of 60. The scale used to measure the frequency for each statement is: (1) almost never, (2) rarely, (3) seldom, (4) once in a while, (5) occasionally, (6) sometimes, (7) fairly often, (8) usually, (9) very frequently, and (10) almost always.

**TABLE 6. Leadership Practices and Corresponding LPI Statement**

<b>Leadership Practice</b>	<b>LPI Statement</b>
Challenge the Process	1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26
Inspire a Shared Vision	2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27
Enable Others to Act	3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28
Model the Way	4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29
Encourage the Heart	5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30

As an addendum to the LPI-Self and LPI-Observer instruments, a researcher-developed questionnaire was included to obtain demographic information for each respondent. This questionnaire was also delivered in two formats—one for the principal and one for the observer. The demographic variables determined by the questionnaire were years of experience, age group, gender, and ethnicity.

Table 7 is an illustration of the years of experience held by the principals that responded to the surveys. Of these 26 principals, 7 had 11 to 20 years of experience in education, 11 had 21 to 30 years of experience, and 8 had been in education for 31 or more years.

**TABLE 7. Years of Experience of Principal Respondents**

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Number of Principals</b>
11 – 20	7
21 – 30	11
31 or more	8

Table 8 is an illustration of the years of experience held by the observers (SBDM committee members) that responded to the surveys. Of the 76 observers that responded to the survey, 19 had 0 to 10 years of experience in education, 32 had 11 to 20 years of experience, 22 had 21 to 30 years, and 3 had been in education for 31 or more years.

**TABLE 8. Years of Experience of Observer Respondents**

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Number of Observers</b>
0 – 10	19
11 – 20	32
21 – 30	22
31 or more	3

Table 9 is a display of the age group of the responding principals. Of the 26 principals that responded to the survey, 13 were 31 to 50 years of age and 13 were 51 or older.

**TABLE 9. Age Group of Principal Respondents**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Number of Principals</b>
31 – 50	13
51 or older	13

Table 10 shows the age group of the responding observers. Of the 76 observers that responded to the survey, 6 were 20 to 30 years of age, 25 were 31 to 40 years of age, 34 were 41 to 50 years of age, and 11 were 51 or older.

**TABLE 10. Age Group of Observer Respondents**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Number of Observers</b>
20 – 30	6
31 – 40	25
41 – 50	34
51 or older	11

Table 11 is an illustration of the gender of the principal respondents. Of the 26 principals that responded to the survey, there were 17 males and 9 females.

**TABLE 11. Gender of Principal Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number of Principals</b>
M	17
F	9

Table 12 is an illustration of the gender of the observer respondents. Of the 76 observers that responded to the survey, there were 14 males and 62 females.



**TABLE 12. Gender of Observer Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number of Principals</b>
M	14
F	62

Table 13 is a display of the ethnicity of the principal respondents. Although the questionnaire had more than two choices for ethnicity, the responses were consolidated because some groups had very few or no participants. Of the 26 principals that responded to the survey, 7 were African American or Hispanic, and 19 were white.

**TABLE 13. Ethnicity of Principal Respondents**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of Principals</b>
African American or Hispanic	7
White	19

Table 14 shows the ethnicity of the observer respondents. As with principals, the ethnic groups were consolidated because of few or no responses in some ethnicities. Of the 76 observers that responded to the survey, 14 were African American or Hispanic, and 62 were white.

**TABLE 14. Ethnicity of Observer Respondents**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of Observers</b>
African American or Hispanic	14
White	62

At the time of this study, campuses were assigned a rating through the Texas Education Agency's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). Four ratings were possible in this system of accountability—with *exemplary* being the highest and *academically unacceptable* being the lowest rating a school could potentially earn. A detailed explanation of the Texas accountability system can be found in Chapter II of this study.

Table 15 illustrates the accountability ratings of the 26 middle schools included in this study. No schools ( $n = 0$ ) were rated the highest possible rating of *exemplary*, only 3.8% ( $n = 1$ ) earned a *recognized* rating, 73.1% ( $n = 19$ ) were considered *academically acceptable*, and 23.1% ( $n = 6$ ) earned the lowest possible rating of *academically unacceptable*.

**TABLE 15. Texas Education Agency AEIS Ratings of Respondent's Campuses**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Exemplary	0	0%
Recognized	1	3.8%
Academically Acceptable	19	73.1%
Academically Unacceptable	6	23.1%

Because of the lack of differentiation between campus ratings among the responding campuses, one indicator on the AEIS report of each campus was used to determine student achievement for the campus. This indicator was the percentage of all Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests passed by students in the school. Among the 26 responding schools, scores ranged from a high of 75% of all tests passed to a low of 28% of all tests passed. Table 16 shows that 19.2% (n = 5) of the schools had a passing rate of 70-75% of all tests, 46.2% (n = 12) of the schools had a passing rate of 60-69% of all tests, and 34.6% (n = 9) of the schools had a passing rate of 28-59%.

**TABLE 16. Percentage of All TAKS Tests Passed by Responding Campuses**

<b>All Tests Passed</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
70% – 75%	5	19.2%
60% - 69%	12	46.2%
28% - 59%	9	34.6%

### **Results of Related Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected site-based decision making (SBDM) committee members of middle schools in Region 5 Education Service Center (ESC), Texas.

*Analysis of Research Question #1*

The researcher sought an answer to Research Question 1 which was, “Is there a relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected SBDM committee members of middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas, as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b)?”

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) scores of respondents were compared to student achievement through several correlations using the SPSS statistical software package. Before running statistical tests, the individual observer scores were combined to create an average observer score for each school. This yielded a single leader score and a single observer average score for each campus, for a total of 52 LPI scores. Correlations were used to determine the possible linear relationship between perceived leadership practices and student achievement.

Each test revealed a Pearson correlation coefficient, which is a measure of linear association between two variables. The value of the Pearson  $r$  indicates the strength of a linear association. The closer the Pearson  $r$  value is to 1, the stronger the positive correlation between the two variables. Conversely, the closer the Pearson  $r$  value is to -1, the stronger the negative correlation is between the two variables. The coefficient of determination, or  $r^2$ , was also calculated from each Pearson  $r$  value. This coefficient is an indication of what percent of the variance in the two variables is common variance. Finally, the significance value is an indication of whether or not the degree of correlation is statistically significant. A significance value less than .05

is an indication of a statistically significant correlation between the two variables.

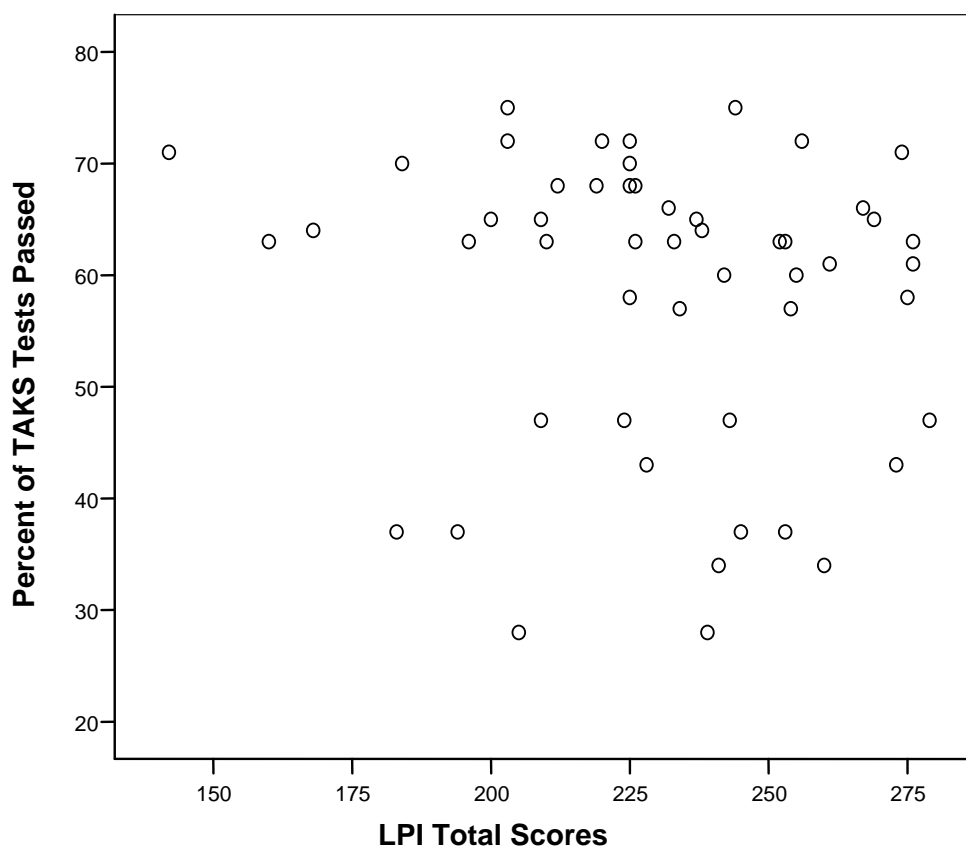
(Spatz, 2001)

The first correlation was between the total LPI scores and student achievement as measured by the percentage of all TAKS tests passed. As illustrated in Table 17, the Pearson correlation coefficient from this test was  $r = -.121$ , and the coefficient of determination ( $r^2 = .01$ ) indicates that only 1% of the variance in the two variables is common variance. The significance value was .393, which indicates a lack of statistical significance at the .05 level.

**TABLE 17. Correlation between LPI Total Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed**

		<b>LPI Total Scores</b>	<b>Percent of TAKS Tests Passed</b>
LPI Total Scores	Pearson Correlation	1	-.121
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.393
	N	52	52
Percent of TAKS Tests Passed	Pearson Correlation	-.121	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.393	
	N	52	52

Figure 1 is a scatterplot depiction of the amount of linear relationship between these two variables. A regression line is not clearly visible in the figure.



**FIGURE 1. Comparison of LPI Total Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed**

There are five specific leadership practices measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). These practices are Challenge the Process, Inspire a Shared Vision, Enable Others to Act, Model the Way, and Encourage the Heart. Each of these practices is measured by six LPI statements with a possible high point total of 60 and a low of 6 for each practice. Correlations were run between each practice and student achievement to determine if there was a stronger relationship between a specific leadership practice and student academic success. Again, the observer scores for each school were averaged to create one observer score and one leader score for each

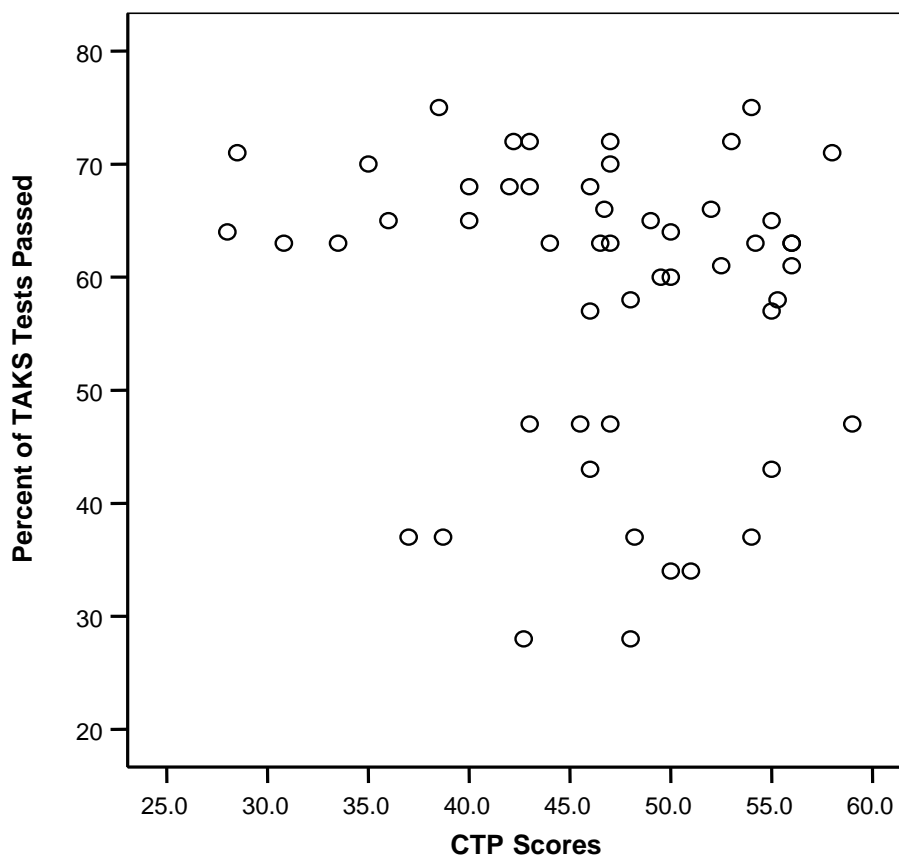
campus. Student performance was again measured by the percent of all TAKS tests passed for each campus.

Kouzes and Posner (2002) speak of leaders venturing out instead of maintaining the status quo. In explaining the practice Challenge the Process, they write, “Leaders know well that innovation and change all involve experimentation, risk, and failure. They proceed anyway” (p. 17). Table 18 is an illustration of the correlation between LPI scores for the leadership practice Challenge the Process (CTP) and student achievement as measured by the percent of all TAKS tests passed. The Pearson  $r = -.121$  and  $r^2 = .01$ . The significance value of .394 was much larger than .05, indicating a lack of statistical significance.

**TABLE 18. Correlation between LPI Challenge the Process (CTP) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed**

		CTP Scores	Percent of TAKS Tests Passed
CTP Scores	Pearson Correlation	1	-.121
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.394
	N	52	52
Percent TAKS Tests Passed	Pearson Correlation	-.121	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.394	
	N	52	52

Figure 2 is a scatterplot depiction of the amount of linear relationship between these two variables. As in the correlation using total LPI scores, there is clearly no visible regression line.



**FIGURE 2. Comparison of LPI Challenge the Process (CTP) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed**

Inspire a Shared Vision is the practice of creating an exciting vision of the future that everyone in the organization can embrace (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). The leader's vision is only powerful in changing an organization if the followers accept the vision as their own. Kouzes and Posner (2002) state:

To enlist people in a vision, leaders must know their constituents and speak their language. People must believe that leaders understand their needs and have their interests at heart. Leadership is a dialogue, not a monologue. To enlist support, leaders must have intimate knowledge of people's dreams, hopes, aspirations, visions, and values. (p. 15)

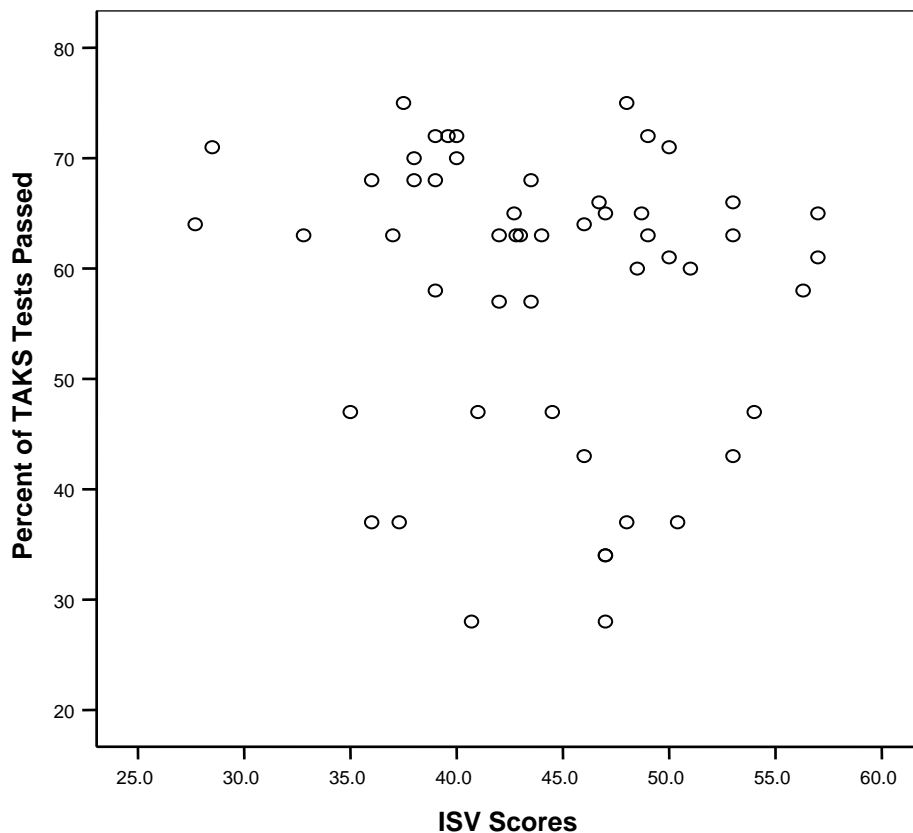


Table 19 is an illustration of the correlation between LPI scores for the leadership practice Inspire a Shared Vision (ISV) and student achievement as measured by the percent of all TAKS tests passed. The Pearson  $r = -.134$  and  $r^2 = .02$ . The significance value of .342 indicates a lack of statistical significance.

**TABLE 19. Correlation between LPI Inspire a Shared Vision (ISV) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed**

		ISV Scores	Percent of TAKS Tests Passed
ISV Scores	Pearson Correlation	1	-.134
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.342
	N	52	52
Percent of TAKS Tests Passed	Pearson Correlation	-.134	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.342	
	N	52	52

Figure 3 is a scatterplot depiction of the amount of linear relationship between these two variables. Once again, there is no clear sign of a line of regression.



**FIGURE 3. Comparison of LPI Inspire a Shared Vision (ISV) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed**

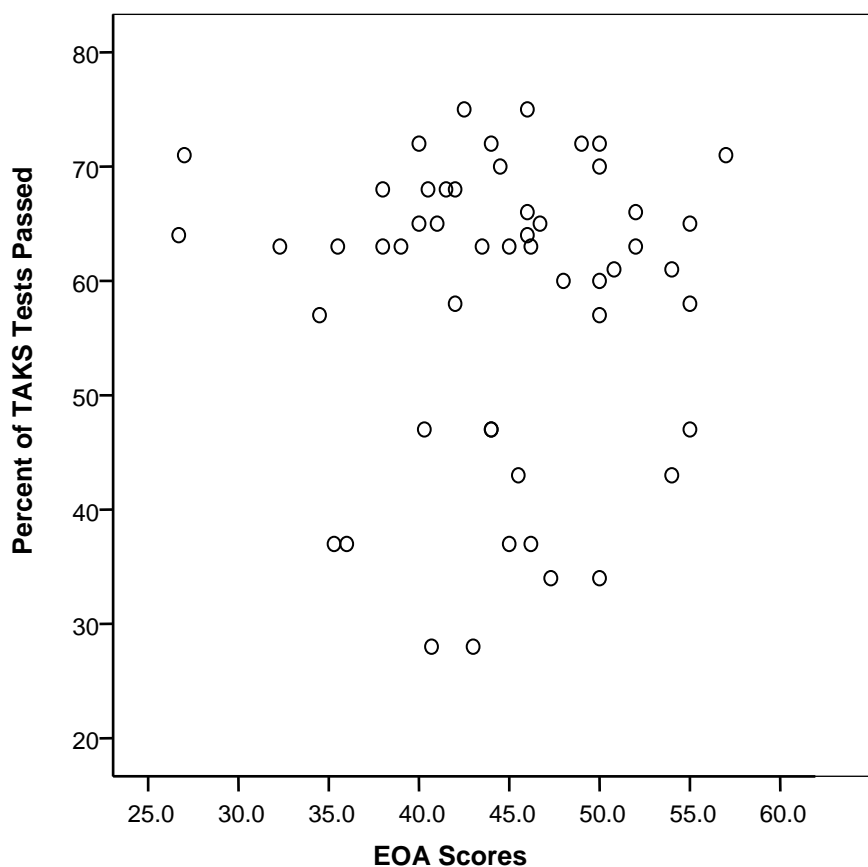
Next, the leadership practice known as Enable Others to Act (EOA) was studied. Speaking about leaders that exemplify this particular leadership practice, Kouzes and Posner (2002) state, “They engage all those who must make the project work—and in some way, all who must live with the results” (p. 18). Leaders that enable those around them to act build leadership capacity within the organization. Table 20 is a depiction of the correlation between LPI scores for this leadership practice and student achievement as measured by the percent of all TAKS tests passed. The

Pearson  $r = -.016$  and  $r^2 = .00$ . The significance value of .912 indicates statistical insignificance at the .05 level.

**TABLE 20. Correlation between LPI Enable Others to Act (EOA) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed**

		EOA Scores	Percent of TAKS Tests Passed
EOA Scores	Pearson Correlation	1	-.016
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.912
	N	52	52
Percent of TAKS Tests Passed	Pearson Correlation	-.016	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.912	
	N	52	52

Figure 4 is a graphic illustration of the correlation between the leadership practice of Enable Others to Act and student achievement. This scatterplot is very similar to previous comparisons between other leadership practices and student achievement.



**FIGURE 4. Comparison of LPI Enable Others to Act (EOA) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed**

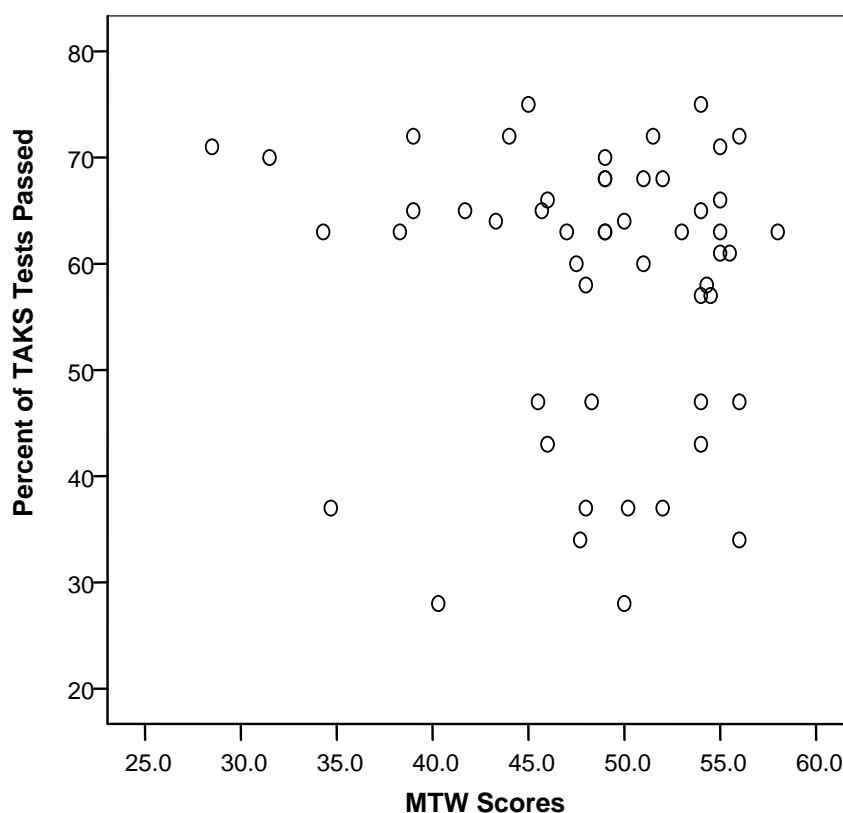
The leadership practice of Model the Way (MTW) was the next practice to be tested using the SPSS software package. According to Kouzes and Posner (2002), leaders must model the behavior they expect of others through their own daily actions. “Modeling the way is essentially about earning the right and the respect to lead through direct individual involvement and action” (p. 15). Table 21 is a depiction of the correlation between LPI scores for this leadership practice and student achievement as measured by the percent of all TAKS tests passed. The Pearson  $r =$

-.07, yielding a coefficient of determination of  $r^2 = .00$  for this particular practice. The significance value of .624 is an indication of a lack of statistical significance at the .05 level.

**TABLE 21. Correlation between LPI Model the Way (MTW) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed**

		<b>MTW Scores</b>	<b>Percent of TAKS Tests Passed</b>
MTW Scores	Pearson Correlation	1	-.070
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.624
	N	52	52
Percent TAKS Tests Passed	Pearson Correlation	-.070	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.624	
	N	52	52

Figure 5 is a scatterplot representation of the correlation between the variables Model the Way scores and percent of all TAKS tests passed. It is easy to see that there is no visible line of regression.



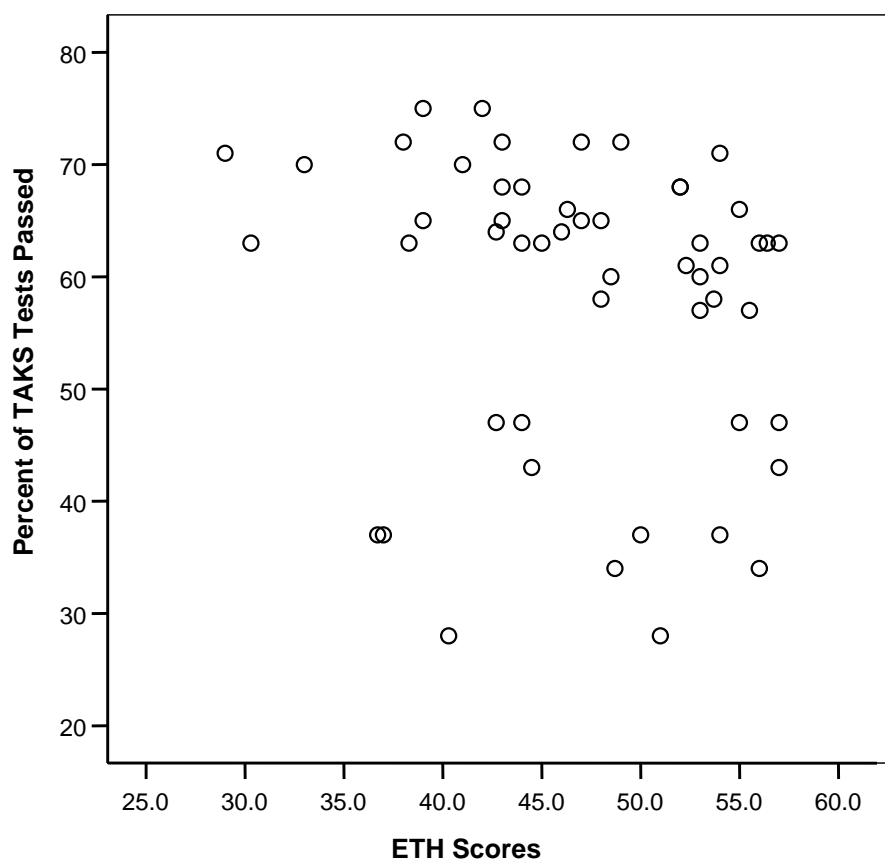
**FIGURE 5. Comparison of LPI Model the Way (MTW) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed**

The final leadership practice to be statistically analyzed was Encourage the Heart (ETH). Of this practice, Kouzes and Posner (2002) state, “It’s part of the leader’s job to show appreciation for people’s contributions and to create a culture of celebration” (p. 19). Authentic recognition and praise inspire members of an organization to achieve. Table 22 depicts the correlation between LPI scores for this leadership practice and student achievement as measured by the percent of all TAKS tests passed. In this case, the Pearson  $r = -.189$  and  $r^2 = .04$ . The significance value of .180 is an indication of a lack of statistical significance.

**TABLE 22. Correlation between LPI Encourage the Heart (ETH) Scores and All TAKS Tests Passed**

		<b>ETH Scores</b>	<b>Percent of TAKS Tests Passed</b>
ETH Scores	Pearson Correlation	1	-.189
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.180
	N	52	52
Percent of TAKS Tests Passed	Pearson Correlation	-.189	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.180	
	N	52	52

Figure 6 is a depiction of the lack of linear relationship between Encourage the Heart scores and TAKS scores. As with total LPI scores and each of the other four leadership practices previously presented, the scatterplot appears random, and there is no indication of a visible line of regression.



**FIGURE 6. Comparison of LPI Encourage the Heart (ETH) Scores and Percent of TAKS Tests Passed**

### *Analysis of Research Question #2*

The researcher sought an answer to Research Question 2, which was, “Are there differences in the responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?”

Participants were surveyed using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). Principals answered the LPI-Self version and selected SBDM committee members responded to the LPI-Observer instrument. On each version of the instrument,



respondents score 30 statements designed to measure perceived leadership practices. The highest possible total score is 300 and the lowest possible score is 30. There are 5 leadership practices measured by the LPI. They are Challenge the Process (CTP), Inspire a Shared Vision (ISV), Enable Others to Act (EOA), Model the Way (MTW), and Encourage the Heart (ETH). Each practice is measured by 6 statements yielding a possible high score of 60 and low score of 6 for each practice.

The means and standard deviations for total LPI scores are shown in Table 23. Observers (selected SBDM committee members) show a mean of 216.081 and a standard deviation of 31.4112. Principals show a mean of 244.654 with a standard deviation of 24.2239. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) for total LPI scores is shown in Table 24. The F statistic is 13.491 and the significance is at .001, which is statistically significant at the .05 level. This is an indication that the difference in the means between groups is statistically significant for total LPI scores.

**TABLE 23. Comparative Statistics for Total LPI Scores**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Observer Averages	26	216.081	31.4112
Principals	26	244.654	24.2239
Total	52	230.367	31.2956

**TABLE 24. ANOVA Table for Total LPI Scores**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10613.469	1	10613.469	13.491	.001
Within Groups	39336.545	50	786.731		
Total	49950.014	51			

The means and standard deviations for the leadership practice Challenge the Process are shown in Table 25. Observers show a mean of 42.935 and a standard deviation of 7.5450. Principals show a mean of 50.115 with a standard deviation of 5.8057. The analysis of variance for this particular practice as shown in Table 26 reveals an F statistic of 14.792 and significance at .000. There is statistical significance at the .05 level between the means of principals and their observers for the practice Challenge the Process.

**TABLE 25. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Challenge the Process**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Observer Averages	26	42.935	7.5450
Principals	26	50.115	5.8057
Total	52	46.525	7.5876

**TABLE 26. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Challenge the Process**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	670.325	1	670.325	14.792	.000
Within Groups	2265.813	50	45.316		
Total	2936.138	51			

The means and standard deviations for the leadership practice Inspire a Shared Vision are shown in Table 27. Observers show a mean of 42.104 and a standard deviation of 6.6274. Principals show a mean of 46.077 with a standard deviation of 6.5539. The analysis of variance for this particular practice as shown in Table 28 reveals an F statistic of 4.724 and significance at .035. There is statistical significance at the .05 level between the means of the two groups for the practice Inspire a Shared Vision.

**TABLE 27. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Inspire a Shared Vision**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Observer Averages	26	42.104	6.6274
Principals	26	46.077	6.5539
Total	52	44.090	6.8271

**TABLE 28. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Inspire a Shared Vision**

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Between Groups	205.209	1	205.209	4.724	.035
Within Groups	2171.896	50	43.438		
Total	2377.105	51			

Table 29 contains the means and standard deviations for the leadership practice Enable Others to Act. For this practice, Observers had a mean of 41.750 and a standard deviation of 6.6931. Principals had a mean of 47.000 and a standard deviation of 6.0200. The analysis of variance which is shown in Table 30 reveals an F

statistic of 8.843 and significance of .005. There is statistical significance at the .05 level between the principal and observer means for this leadership practice.

**TABLE 29. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Enable Others to Act**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Observer Averages	26	41.750	6.6931
Principals	26	47.000	6.0200
Total	52	44.375	6.8374

**TABLE 30. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Enable Others to Act**

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Between Groups	358.313	1	358.313	8.843	.005
Within Groups	2025.925	50	40.519		
Total	2384.238	51			

Table 31 contains the means and standard deviations for the leadership practice Model the Way. For this practice, Observers had a mean of 45.319 and a standard deviation of 7.4877. Principals had a mean of 51.423 and a standard deviation of 4.2818. The analysis of variance which is shown in Table 32 shows an F statistic of 13.020 and significance of .001. There is statistical significance at the .05 level between the principal and observer means for the leadership practice Model the Way.

**TABLE 31. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Model the Way**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Observer Averages	26	45.319	7.4877
Principals	26	51.423	4.2818
Total	52	48.371	6.7799

**TABLE 32. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Model the Way**

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Between Groups	484.340	1	484.340	13.020	.001
Within Groups	1859.987	50	37.200		
Total	2344.327	51			

The analysis of the final leadership practice, Encourage the Heart, is illustrated in Table 33. Observers show a mean of 43.996 and a standard deviation of 7.3169. Principals show a mean of 50.038 and a standard deviation of 5.9024. The analysis of variance for this practice is illustrated in Table 34. The F statistic was 10.741 and the significance was .002. As in the previous tests involving the four other leadership practices and the test involving total LPI scores, there was once again statistical significance at the .05 level for the mean difference between principals and their observers.

**TABLE 33. Comparative Statistics for the Leadership Practice Encourage the Heart**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Observer Averages	26	43.996	7.3169
Principals	26	50.038	5.9024
Total	52	47.017	7.2545

**TABLE 34. ANOVA Table for the Leadership Practice Encourage the Heart**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	474.623	1	474.623	10.741	.002
Within Groups	2209.371	50	44.187		
Total	2683.994	51			

The Leadership Practices Inventory is one of the most widely used leadership assessment instruments. There is a research database including over 100,000 respondents, with over 250,000 leaders and almost one million observers completing the instrument since it was first introduced (Kouzes & Posner, 2003b). The results of these surveys were used to create percentile rankings of the scores. The highest scores for each practice are in the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile, and the lowest scores are below the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile. Table 35 is an illustration of the breakdown of scores by percentile.

**TABLE 35. Leadership Practices Inventory Percentile Rankings**

	High Score Range	Moderate Score Range	Low Score Range
Model the Way	51 - 60	44 - 50	22 - 43
Inspire a Shared Vision	50 - 60	40 - 49	18 - 39
Challenge the Process	50 - 60	43 - 49	24 - 42
Enable Others to Act	53 - 60	47 - 52	24 - 46
Encourage the Heart	52 - 60	43 - 51	22 - 42

For this study, Table 36 is an illustration of the percentage of principals that self-rated in each range of scores and also the percentage of observers that rated their leader in each of the three ranges. For all five practices, a greater percentage of principals rated themselves in the highest percentile than did the observers. Conversely, a greater percentage of observers rated their principals in the low score range than did the principals themselves for each practice.

**TABLE 36. Percentile Rankings of Principals and Observers**

	High Score Range	Moderate Score Range	Low Score Range
Model the Way			
Principals	57.69%	38.46%	3.85%
Observers	39.47%	25.00%	35.53%
Inspire a Shared Vision			
Principals	30.77%	46.15%	23.08%
Observers	25.00%	39.47%	35.53%
Challenge the Process			
Principals	57.69%	30.77%	11.54%
Observers	40.79%	14.47%	44.74%
Enable Others to Act			
Principals	19.23%	30.77%	50.00%
Observers	18.42%	17.11%	64.47%
Encourage the Heart			
Principals	53.85%	34.61%	11.54%
Observers	32.89%	31.58%	35.53%

### *Analysis of Research Question #3*

The researcher sought an answer to Research Question 3 which was, “Do selected demographic variables impact responses of principals and selected SBDM committee

members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?”

A researcher-developed questionnaire was used to gather demographic information about the respondents. Participants were asked to reveal their years of experience in public education, age group, gender, and ethnicity. There were four choices for years of experience: 0 – 10 years, 11 – 20 years, 21 – 30 years, or 31 or more years. Similarly, age group was divided into 20 – 30, 31 – 40, 41 – 50, or over 50. Although the questionnaire gave more options for ethnicity, this demographic variable was combined into two groups due to extremely small numbers of respondents of certain ethnicities. The remaining two groups were White and African American or Hispanic.

*How does the level of experience of the respondent affect the overall rating of the principal?* The observers were asked to rank their leader (principal) as above average, average, or below average on the researcher-developed questionnaire included with each survey. Table 37 is an illustration of the totals of these rankings, broken down by the demographic category years of experience in education of the observer.

Of the 42 observers that rated their principal above average: 10 had 0 – 10 years of experience, 16 had 11 – 20 years of experience, 13 had 21 – 30 years of experience, and 3 had 31 or more years of experience. Of the 27 observers that rated their principal average, 9 had 0 – 10 years in education, 13 had 11 – 20 years, and 5 had 21 – 30 years. No observer with 31 or more years of experience rated their principal as average. Of the 7 observers that rated their principal below average: 3 had 11 – 20



years in education and 4 had 21 – 30 years. No observers in the other two age groups rated their principal below average.

**TABLE 37. Observer Ratings of Principals—by Years of Experience**

	Above Average	Average	Below Average
All Observers	42	27	7
0 – 10 Years Exp	10	9	0
11 – 20 Years Exp	16	13	3
21 – 30 Years Exp	13	5	4
31 or More Years Exp	3	0	0

Table 38 is an illustration of the percentage of observers that ranked their principal as above average, average, or below average. Observers with 21 or more years of experience tended to rank their principal as above average at a higher rate than all observers. This group of experienced observers also ranked their principal as below average at a higher rate. Observers with less experience (0 to 10 years) rated their principal average at a higher rate than all observers, but this same group did not rate a single leader as below average.

**TABLE 38. Observer Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Years of Experience**

	Above Average	Average	Below Average
All Observers	55.26%	35.53%	9.21%
0 – 10 Years Exp	52.63%	47.37%	0.00%
11 – 20 Years Exp	50.00%	40.63%	9.37%
21 – 30 Years Exp	59.09%	22.73%	18.18%
31 or More Years Exp	100%	0.00%	0.00%

The principals were also asked to rate their own leadership ability as above average, average, or below average on the researcher-developed questionnaire included with each survey. Table 39 is a display of the totals of these self-ratings, broken down by the demographic category years of experience in education of the principal.

Of the 18 principals that rated themselves above average, 3 had 11 – 20 years of experience, 9 had 21 – 30 years of experience, and 6 had 31 or more years of experience. Of the 8 principals that rated themselves average, 4 had 11 – 20 years in the field, 2 had 21 – 30 years, and 2 were in the most experienced group of 31 or more years. No principal self-rated as below average.

**TABLE 39. Self Ratings of Principals—by Years of Experience**

	Above Average	Average	Below Average
All Principals	18	8	0
11 – 20 Years Exp	3	4	0
21 – 30 Years Exp	9	2	0
31 or More Years Exp	6	2	0

Table 40 is a display of the percentage of principals that rated their own leadership ability as above average, average, or below average. Principals with 21 or more years of experience tended to rate themselves as above average at a higher rate than all principals. Principals with less experience (11 to 20 years) rated themselves average at a higher rate than all principals. No principal self-rated as below average.

**TABLE 40. Self-Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Years of Experience**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Principals	69.23%	30.77%	0.00%
11 – 20 Years Exp	42.86%	57.14%	0.00%
21 – 30 Years Exp	81.82%	18.18%	0.00%
31 or More Years Exp	75.00%	25.00%	0.00%

Next, the total scores on the LPI instrument for each participant, principals and observers, were analyzed with the SPSS statistical software package. Table 41 is a display of the mean and standard error of all respondents by years of experience. Respondents with 0 – 10 years of experience (n = 19) had a mean of 235.884 with a standard error of 13.119. Those with 11 – 20 years of experience (n = 39) had a mean of 226.208 and a standard error of 9.751. Those in education for 21 – 30 years (n = 33) had a mean of 212.690 and a standard error of 10.774. And finally, those in education for 31 or more years (n = 11) had a mean of 242.475 and a standard error of 17.824.

**TABLE 41. Estimated Marginal Means—Years of Experience**

<b>Experience</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>
0 – 10 Years	19	235.884	13.119
11 – 20 Years	39	226.208	9.751
21 – 30 Years	33	212.690	10.774
31 or More Years	11	242.475	17.824

Table 42 is an illustration of the comparisons of the total LPI scores among all respondents by years of experience. While there are some mean differences that appear large—such as between 0 – 10 years of experience and 21 – 30 years of experience (mean difference = 23.193), or 31 or more years of experience and 21 – 30 years of experience (mean difference = 29.785)—all of the significance values are greater than .05. These values must be less than .05 to show statistical significance.

**TABLE 42. Pairwise Comparisons—Years of Experience**

(I) Experience	(J) Experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. (a)
0 - 10 Years	11 - 20 Years	9.676 (b,c)	16.346	.556
	21 - 30 Years	23.193 (b,c)	16.976	.176
	31 or More Years	-6.591 (b,c)	22.131	.767
11 - 20 Years	0 - 10 Years	-9.676 (b,c)	16.346	.556
	21 - 30 Years	13.518 (b,c)	14.532	.355
	31 or More Years	-16.267 (b,c)	20.317	.426
21 - 30 Years	0 - 10 Years	-23.193 (b,c)	16.976	.176
	11 - 20 Years	-13.518 (b,c)	14.532	.355
	31 or More Years	-29.785 (b,c)	20.827	.157
31 or More Years	0 - 10 Years	6.591 (b,c)	22.131	.767
	11 - 20 Years	16.267 (b,c)	20.317	.426
	21 - 30 Years	29.785 (b,c)	20.827	.157

Based on estimated marginal means

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

b. An estimate of the modified population marginal mean (I).

c. An estimate of the modified population marginal mean (J).

*How does the age of the respondent affect the overall rating of the principal?* The observers were asked to rank their leader (principal) as above average, average, or

below average on the researcher-developed questionnaire included with each survey. Table 43 is an illustration of the totals of these rankings, broken down by the demographic category age group of the observer.

Of the 42 observers that rated their principal above average, 4 were 20 – 30 years of age, 11 were 31 – 40 years of age, 21 were 41 – 50 years of age, and 6 were over 50. Of the 27 observers that rated their principal average, 2 were in the youngest age group of 20 – 30, 13 were 31 – 40 years of age, 9 were 41 – 50 years of age, and 3 were over 50. Of the 7 observers that rated their principal below average, 1 was 31 – 40 years of age, 4 were in the next group of 41 – 50, and 2 were over 50. No observer in the youngest age group rated their principal below average.

**TABLE 43. Observer Ratings of Principals—by Age Group**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Observers	42	27	7
20 – 30 Years of Age	4	2	0
31 – 40 Years of Age	11	13	1
41 – 50 Years of Age	21	9	4
51 + Years of Age	6	3	2

Table 44 is a display of the percentage of observers that ranked their principal as above average, average, or below average. Observers in the age groups 21 to 30 and 41 to 50 ranked their principal above average at a higher rate than all observers. Those observers in the age group 31 to 40 leaned toward the rating of average at a much higher percentage. Observers in the age groups 41 to 50 and 51 or older were more likely to rate their principal as below average than their younger counterparts.

**TABLE 44. Observer Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Age Group**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Observers	55.26%	35.53%	9.21%
20 – 30 Years of Age	66.67%	33.33%	0.00%
31 – 40 Years of Age	44.00%	52.00%	4.00%
41 – 50 Years of Age	61.76%	26.47%	11.77%
51 + Years of Age	54.55%	27.27%	18.18%

The principals were asked to rate their own leadership ability as above average, average, or below average on the researcher-developed questionnaire included with each survey. Table 45 is a display of the totals of these rankings, broken down by the demographic category age group of the principal.

There were 18 principals that rated themselves above average. Of these leaders, 8 were 31 – 50 years old and 10 were over 50. Of the 8 principals that rated themselves average, 5 were 31 – 50 years old and 3 were over 50. No principal self-rated below average.

**TABLE 45. Self Ratings of Principals—by Age Group**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Principals	18	8	0
31 – 50 years of age	8	5	0
51 + years of age	10	3	0

Table 46 is a display of the percentage of principals that rated their own leadership ability as above average, average, or below average. Older principals were more likely to rate themselves above average.

**TABLE 46. Self Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Age Group**

	Above Average	Average	Below Average
All Principals	69.23%	30.77%	0.00%
31 – 50 years of age	61.54%	38.46%	0.00%
51 + years of age	76.92%	23.08%	0.00%

Table 47 is a display of the mean and standard error of LPI total scores for all principals and observers by age group. Respondents age 20 – 30 (n = 6) had a mean of 234.000 with a standard error of 18.595. Those age 31 – 40 (n = 27) had a mean of 215.790 and a standard error of 13.096. Those age 41 – 50 years (n = 45) had a mean of 227.158 and a standard error of 9.545. And finally, those age 51 or more (n = 24) had a mean of 235.683 and a standard error of 11.761.

**TABLE 47. Estimated Marginal Means—Age Group**

Age Group	n	Mean	Std. Error
20 – 30 Years	6	234.000	18.595
31 – 40 Years	27	215.790	13.096
41 – 50 Years	45	227.158	9.545
51 + Years	24	235.683	11.761

Table 48 is an illustration of the comparisons of the total LPI scores among all respondents by age group. While there are some mean differences that appear large—such as between 20 – 30 years of age and 31 – 40 years of age (mean difference =

18.210), or 51 or more years of age and 31 – 40 years of age (mean difference = 19.894)—all of the significance values are greater than .05. These values must be less than .05 to show statistical significance.

**TABLE 48. Pairwise Comparisons—Age Group**

(I) Age Group	(J) Age Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. (a)
20 - 30 years of age	31 - 40 years of age	18.210 (b,c)	22.744	.426
	41 - 50 years of age	6.842 (b,c)	20.902	.744
	51 or older	-1.683 (b,c)	22.002	.939
31 - 40 years of age	20 - 30 years of age	-18.210 (b,c)	22.744	.426
	41 - 50 years of age	-11.369 (b,c)	16.206	.485
	51 or older	-19.894 (b,c)	17.602	.262
41 - 50 years of age	20 - 30 years of age	-6.842 (b,c)	20.902	.744
	31 - 40 years of age	11.369 (b,c)	16.206	.485
	51 or older	-8.525 (b,c)	15.147	.575
51 or older	20 - 30 years of age	1.683 (b,c)	22.002	.939
	31 - 40 years of age	19.894 (b,c)	17.602	.262
	41 - 50 years of age	8.525 (b,c)	15.147	.575

Based on estimated marginal means

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

b. An estimate of the modified population marginal mean (I).

c. An estimate of the modified population marginal mean (J).

*How does the gender of the respondent affect the overall rating of the principal?*

The observers were asked to rank their leader (principal) as above average, average, or below average on the researcher-developed questionnaire included with each survey. Table 49 is a display of the totals of these rankings, broken down by the demographic category gender of the observer.



Of the 42 observers that rated their principal above average, 5 were male and 37 were female. There were 7 male observers and 20 female observers that rated their principal average. And finally, there were 2 males and 5 females that rated their principal below average.

**TABLE 49. Observer Ratings of Principals—by Gender**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Observers	42	27	7
Male	5	7	2
Female	37	20	5

Table 50 is a display of the percentage of observers that ranked their principal as above average, average, or below average. Male observers rated their principal above average at a much lower rate than female observers. Male observers were also much more likely to rate their principal as average or below average than their female colleagues.

**TABLE 50. Observer Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Gender**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Observers	55.26%	35.53%	9.21%
Male	35.71%	50.00%	14.29%
Female	59.68%	32.26%	8.06%

The principals were also asked to rate their own leadership ability as above average, average, or below average on the researcher-developed questionnaire included with each survey. Table 51 is a display of the totals of these rankings, broken down by the demographic category gender of the principal.

Of the 18 principals that rated themselves above average, 12 were male and 6 were female. Of the 8 principals that rated themselves average, 5 were male and 3 were female. No principal self-rated below average.

**TABLE 51. Self Ratings of Principals—by Gender**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Principals	18	8	0
Male	12	5	0
Female	6	3	0

Table 52 is a display of the percentage of principals that rated their own leadership ability as above average, average, or below average. Male principals were slightly more likely to rate themselves as above average than female principals. Females rated themselves as average at a slightly higher rate.

**TABLE 52. Self Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Gender**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Principals	69.23%	30.77%	0.00%
Male	70.59%	29.41%	0.00%
Female	66.67%	33.33%	0.00%

Table 53 is a display of the mean and standard error of total LPI scores for all principals and observers by gender. Male respondents ( $n = 31$ ) had a mean of 228.971 with a standard error of 10.331. Female respondents ( $n = 71$ ) had a mean of 227.188 and a standard error of 7.454.

**TABLE 53. Estimated Marginal Means—Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>
Male	31	228.971	10.331
Female	71	227.188	7.454

Table 54 is a representation of the comparisons of the total LPI scores among all respondents by gender. The mean differences are small (-1.783, 1.783) and the significance is .889, which is statistically insignificant at the .05 level.

**TABLE 54. Pairwise Comparisons—Gender**

<b>(I) Gender</b>	<b>(J) Gender</b>	<b>Mean Difference (I-J)</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Sig.(a)</b>
F	M	-1.783(b,c)	12.740	.889
M	F	1.783(b,c)	12.740	.889

Based on estimated marginal means

- a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).
- b. An estimate of the modified population marginal mean (I).
- c. An estimate of the modified population marginal mean (J).

*How does the ethnicity of the respondent affect the overall rating of the principal?*

The observers were asked to rank their leader (principal) as above average, average, or below average on the researcher-developed questionnaire included with each survey. Table 55 shows the totals of these rankings, broken down by the demographic category ethnicity of the observer.

Of the observers that rated their principal above average, 4 were African American or Hispanic and 38 were white. Of those that rated their principal average, 9 were African American or Hispanic and 18 were white. Of those that rated their principal as below average, 1 was African American or Hispanic and 6 were white.

**TABLE 55. Observer Ratings of Principals—by Ethnicity**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Observers	42	27	7
African American or Hispanic	4	9	1
White	38	18	6

Table 56 is a representation of the percentage of observers that ranked their principal as above average, average, or below average. Observers in the African American or Hispanic group rated their principal above average at a much lower rate than other observers. These observers were much more likely to rate their principal as average. Observers from all ethnic groups rated their principal as below average at approximately the same percentage.

**TABLE 56. Observer Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Ethnicity**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Observers	55.26%	35.53%	9.21%
African American or Hispanic	28.57%	64.29%	7.14%
White	61.29%	29.03%	9.68%

The principals were also asked to rate their own leadership ability as above average, average, or below average on the researcher-developed questionnaire included with each survey. Table 57 is a display of the totals of these rankings, broken down by the demographic category ethnicity of the principal.

In the African American or Hispanic group, 5 self-rated above average. Thirteen white principals rated themselves above average. Two African American or Hispanic principals rated themselves as average while six white principals rated themselves as average. No principal self-rated below average.

**TABLE 57. Self Ratings of Principals—by Ethnicity**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Principals	18	8	0
African American or Hispanic	5	2	0
White	13	6	0

Table 58 is a display of the percentage of principals by ethnicity that rated their own leadership ability as above average, average, or below average. With 71.43% of African American or Hispanic principals and 68.42% of white principals rating themselves as above average, there is almost no difference between the two ethnic groups. This lack of difference between the groups also holds true for those self-rating as average (28.57% of African American or Hispanic principals and 31.58% of white principals).

**TABLE 58. Self Ratings of Principals by Percentage—by Ethnicity**

	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
All Principals	69.23%	30.77%	0.00%
African American or Hispanic	71.43%	28.57%	0.00%
White	68.42%	31.58%	0.00%

Table 59 is a display of the mean and standard error of the total LPI scores for all principals and observers by ethnicity. White respondents (n = 81) had a mean of 228.003 with a standard error of 6.984. African American or Hispanic respondents (n = 21) had a mean of 227.947 and a standard error of 11.277.

**TABLE 59. Estimated Marginal Means—Ethnicity**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>
White	81	228.003	6.984
African American or Hispanic	21	227.947	11.277

Table 60 is an illustration of the comparisons of the total LPI scores among all respondents by ethnicity. The mean differences are small (.056, -.056) and the significance is .997, which is statistically insignificant at the .05 level.

**TABLE 60. Pairwise Comparisons—Ethnicity**

<b>(I) Ethnicity</b>	<b>(J) Ethnicity</b>	<b>Mean Difference (I-J)</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Sig. (a)</b>
White	African Amer. or Hispanic	.056 (b,c)	13.264	.997
African Amer. or Hispanic	White	-.056 (b,c)	13.264	.997

Based on estimated marginal means

- a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).
- b. An estimate of the modified population marginal mean (I).
- c. An estimate of the modified population marginal mean (J).

## Summary

This study involved the analysis of data from the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), a researcher-developed demographic questionnaire, and accountability information from Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports for the participating schools. There were 102 total surveys used in the study, with 26 being from principals and 76 from observers. Three research questions were tested.

With the first question, the researcher dealt with the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected site-based decision making (SBDM) committee members. The perceived leadership practices were measured by administering the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) surveys to the principals and observers. Student performance data was obtained from Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports for each participating campus. The overall indication is that there is not a significant correlation between perceived leadership practices as measured by the LPI and student academic performance as measured by the passing rate on the Texas Academic Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests.

The correlation between the total LPI scores and student achievement as measured by the percentage of all TAKS tests passed revealed a Pearson correlation coefficient of  $r = -.121$  and the coefficient of determination was  $r^2 = .01$ . The significance value was .393, which is an indication of a lack of statistical significance (see Table 17). While the  $r$  and  $r^2$  values varied slightly among the correlations involving the five separate leadership practices and student achievement, in every case the numbers are an indication that there is not a statistically significant correlation between LPI scores and student achievement as measured by the percentage of all TAKS tests passed (see Tables 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22).

The second research question was an examination of the possible differences in the responses of principals and selected observers regarding perceived leadership practices. The researcher was able to demonstrate that principals rated themselves higher as a group on the LPI-Self instrument than their observers rated them on the



LPI-Observer instrument. Table 23 is a demonstration that the mean total LPI score for principals was 244.654 with a standard deviation of 24.2239. The mean total LPI score for observers was 216.081 with a standard deviation of 31.4112. With a significance value of .001, the mean difference between the two groups was statistically significant. While the exact numbers varied slightly, this statistically significant trend was consistent throughout all five leadership practices measured by the LPI (see Tables 25 through 34).

With the third and final research question, the researcher explored whether selected demographic variables impacted the responses of principals and their observers regarding perceived leadership practices. Demographic information was obtained from responses to the researcher-developed questionnaire included with the LPI surveys. LPI scores as well as a statement on the researcher-developed questionnaire asking for an overall leader rating were used to answer this research question. The demographic variables examined were *years of experience*, *age group*, *gender*, and *ethnicity*.

As shown in Table 38, observers with 21 – 30 years of experience were more likely to rate their leader below average than less experienced observers. Table 40 is an illustration that principals with more years of experience (21 – 30 and 31 or more years) were almost twice as likely to rate themselves above average than their less experienced counterparts. Similarly, older observers were much more likely to rate a leader below average than their younger colleagues, and older principals were more likely to self-rate above average than their younger colleagues (see Tables 44 and 46).

While female observers were much more likely to rate their leader above average (59.68%) than males (35.71%), there was almost no difference between the self-ratings of female and male principals (see Tables 50 and 52). And finally, as reflected in Table 56, a higher percentage of white observers (61.29%) rated their principal as above average than did observers in the African American or Hispanic group (28.57%). There was, however, almost no difference in the self-ratings of the principals in the two ethnic groups (see Table 58).

The overall indication was that there were some differences between the responses among the various demographic groups when principals and observers were studied separately based on responses to the researcher-developed questionnaire. However, these differences became statistically insignificant when all respondents, principals and observers, were analyzed together as one group based on responses to the LPI (see Tables 42, 48, 54, and 60).

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected site-based decision making (SBDM) committee members of middle schools in Region 5 Education Service Center (ESC), Texas. Selected demographic variables of the respondents were also studied to determine their effect on leader ratings.

A review of the literature on leadership in general was conducted. This review included literature specific to the history of leadership and organizational management as well as the traits of successful leaders. The review narrowed to literature specific to school leadership topics, such as the school principal, unique qualities of middle schools, and an explanation of the federal and Texas accountability systems that measure school performance and student success.

Three questions were posed to investigate the research:

1. Is there a relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected site-based decision making (SBDM) committee members of middle schools in Region 5 Education Service Center (ESC), Texas, as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b)?

2. Are there differences in the responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?
3. Do selected demographic variables impact responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?

### **Summary of Findings**

A review of my findings for each research question is presented in this section.

1. Is there a relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and selected SBDM committee members of middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas, as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b)?

As indicated in the question, the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) instrument designed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b) was used to investigate this research question. The LPI-Self version (Appendix A) was administered to participating middle school principals and the LPI-Observer version (Appendix B) was administered to participating site-based decision making committee members.

The responses to the 30 statements on the LPI survey were analyzed as total LPI scores. Additionally, the scores for each of the five leadership practices measured by the LPI survey were analyzed. Before running statistical tests, the individual observer scores were combined to create an average observer score for each school. For each

participating middle school, this resulted in a single leader total LPI score and a single observer average LPI score as well as a single leader score and observer average score for each of the five practices for each campus.

The researcher examined Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports for each campus to determine a score to represent student achievement. The percent of all Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests passed for the campus was chosen to represent this variable. Correlations were run using the SPSS statistical software package to determine if a linear relationship exists between perceived leadership practices and student achievement.

The correlation between total LPI scores for all respondents and student performance as measured by the percent of all TAKS tests passed revealed that a linear relationship does not exist between these two variables. With a Pearson correlation coefficient of  $r = -.121$  and a coefficient of determination of  $r^2 = .01$ , the conclusion is that only 1% of the variance in the two variables is common variance. In other words, only 1% of one variable can be determined by knowledge of the other variable. Furthermore, the significance value of .393 indicates a lack of statistical significance at the .05 level (see Table 17 and Figure 1).

Similarly, when scores for the leadership practice Challenge the Process were isolated and a correlation was run between these scores and the percent of all TAKS tests passed, no linear relationship was found. The Pearson correlation coefficient was found to be  $r = -.121$  and the coefficient of determination was  $r^2 = .01$ . The significance value was again well above the .05 level at .394, indicating a lack of statistical significance (see Table 18 and Figure 2).

The correlation between the other four leadership practice scores and student performance on TAKS tests also revealed a lack of linear relationship between any of the pairs of variables. For the correlation between Inspire a Shared Vision scores and student performance on TAKS tests the Pearson correlation coefficient was  $r = -.134$  and the coefficient of determination was  $r^2 = .02$ . The significance value was .342, indicating a lack of statistical significance (see Table 19 and Figure 3).

Enable Others to Act scores and student performance showed a complete lack of linear relationship with the Pearson correlation coefficient of  $r = -.016$ , the coefficient of determination of  $r^2 = .00$ , and the significance at .912. This high significance value indicates a lack of statistical significance at the .05 level (see Table 20 and Figure 4).

Analysis of Model the Way scores correlated to student performance revealed a Pearson correlation coefficient of  $r = .07$  and a coefficient of determination of  $r^2 = .00$ . The significance of .624 was an indication of a lack of statistical significance at the .05 level. Like the correlation using Enable Others to Act scores, this test revealed that 0% of one variable could be determined by knowledge of the other variable (see Table 21 and Figure 5).

Finally, the correlation between Encourage the Heart scores and student performance on TAKS tests revealed a Pearson value of  $r = -.189$ , a coefficient of determination  $r^2 = .04$ , and a significance value of .180. Similar to the previous correlations involving specific leadership practices or LPI total scores, this significance value indicates a lack of statistical significance for the correlation between Encourage the Heart scores and student achievement (see Table 22 and Figure 6).

It is interesting to note that there was almost no difference between the results of the six correlations. In all cases, a linear relationship could not be found between perceived leadership practices as measured by the LPI instrument and student performance as measured by the percent of TAKS tests passed on a campus. Spatz (2001) notes that high correlation coefficient values do not provide enough evidence to make cause and effect statements. Because of the potential effects of other variables, a researcher must be cautious in this arena; therefore, the reverse can also be true. A lack of correlation does not necessarily mean that one variable does not have some effect on the other. Other variables not being considered may simply have such a great influence that the effect of the variable in question is negated.

2. Are there differences in the responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?

Participating principals and site-based decision making (SBDM) committee members were surveyed using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The LPI-Self (Appendix A) was given to principals and the SBDM committee members were given the LPI-Observer version (Appendix B). Each version of the instrument measures five specific leadership practices with six statements for each practice. Both versions use a 10 point Likert scale to measure the frequency of leader behaviors identified by each statement. The scale is: (1) almost never, (2) rarely, (3) seldom, (4) once in a while, (5) occasionally, (6) sometimes, (7) fairly often, (8) usually, (9) very frequently, and (10) almost always. Each practice yields a possible high score of 60 and the total instrument yields a possible high score of 300.

The LPI scores for each principal and the observer averages for each school campus were analyzed in terms of mean and standard deviation. This was done for total LPI scores as well as for each separate leadership practice. The data were an indication that overall and for each of the five leadership practices, principals rated themselves higher than their observers rated them.

Comparative statistics for total LPI scores revealed an observer mean of 216.081 with a standard deviation of 31.4112. The principals had a mean of 244.645 with a standard deviation of 24.2239. The mean difference between the two groups was 28.573. The analysis of variance between groups indicated statistical significance between the means of principals and observers with a significance value of .001 (see Tables 4.18 and 4.19).

For the leadership practice Challenge the Process, the observers had a mean of 42.935 with a standard deviation of 7.5450. Principals had a mean of 50.115 with a standard deviation of 5.8057. The difference in the means was 7.18. The analysis of variance between groups was an indication of statistical significance between the means of principals and observers for this leadership practice, with a significance value of .000 (see Tables 25 and 26).

The leadership practice Inspire a Shared Vision revealed an observer mean of 42.104 with a standard deviation of 6.6274. For this practice principals had a mean of 46.077 and a standard deviation of 6.5539. Although there was only a slight difference in means at 3.973, principals still rated themselves higher for this practice than their observers rated them. The analysis of variance between groups indicated



statistical significance between the means of principals and observers for this leadership practice as well, with a significance value of .035 (see Tables 27 and 28).

Continuing this trend, the mean of observer scores for the leadership practice Enable Others to Act was 41.750 with a standard deviation of 6.6931. The principals showed a mean of 47.000 and a standard deviation of 6.0200. The mean of principal scores was 5.25 points higher than the mean of observer scores. The analysis of variance between groups for this practice, furthermore, yielded a significance value of .005, which is statistically significant at the .05 level (see Tables 29 and 30).

For the practice Model the Way, observers had a mean score of 45.319 with a standard deviation of 7.4877. Principals had a mean score of 51.423 with a standard deviation of 4.2818. The difference in means was 6.104. The analysis of variance between groups was an indication of statistical significance between the means of principals and observers for the practice Model the Way, with a significance value of .001 (see Tables 31 and 32).

Finally, for the practice Encourage the Heart observers had a mean score of 43.996 with a standard deviation of 7.3169. Principals had a mean score of 50.038 with a standard deviation of 5.9024. The difference in means was 6.042. Like the previous leadership practices, the analysis of variance between groups was an indication of statistical significance in the mean difference between principals and observers for Encourage the Heart, with a significance value of .002 (see Tables 33 and 34).

It is interesting to note that the leadership practice with the highest means for both principals and observers was Model the Way. Inspire a Shared Vision had the

lowest mean for the principal self-ratings, while Enable Others to Act had the lowest mean for the observer ratings of the principals. Conversely, Enable Others to Act had the next to lowest mean for principal self-ratings and Inspire a Shared Vision had the next to lowest mean for the observer ratings of principals. Therefore, the two groups show agreement as to what leadership practice is most prevalent among the principals and what two leadership practices rank lowest among the principals.

When the individual LPI scores of all of the respondents in this study were compared to the percentile rankings of over 100,000 previous respondents (Kouzes & Posner, 2003b), there were some interesting findings. Over 50% of the principal self-scores fell into the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile, or high score range, for three of the leadership practices. These practices include Model the Way, Challenge the Process, and Encourage the Heart. An extremely low percentage of principals in this study, 3.85%, rated themselves in the low score range, or below the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile, for the practice Model the Way. At the other extreme, 50% of them rated themselves in the low score range for the practice Enable Others to Act (see Table 36).

The LPI scores of the observers in this study were much more evenly spread among the percentile groups for most of the leadership practices. The two practices where the observers in this study differ most from the group used to create the percentile database were Challenge the Process and Enable Others to Act.

For Challenge the Process, 40.79% of the SBDM committee members in this study rated their leader in the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile and 44.74% of them rated their leader in the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile. Only 14.47% of the observers rated their leader in the moderate score range for this practice.

For Enable Others to Act, 64.47% of the observers in this study rated their principal in the low score range, or 30<sup>th</sup> percentile. Only 18.42% scored their principals in the high score range and 17.11% scored them in the moderate score range for this practice. When compared to the percentile rankings developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003b), a much greater percentage of principals and observers in this study scored the principals in the low score range for the practice Enable Others to Act than for any other leadership practice (see Table 36).

3. Do selected demographic variables impact responses of principals and selected SBDM committee members regarding perceived leadership practices in middle schools in Region 5 ESC, Texas?

The researcher-developed questionnaire was used to gather demographic information about each respondent. The selected demographic variables obtained from this questionnaire were, years of experience in public education, age group, gender, and ethnicity. The leader version of the questionnaire (Appendix D) asked each principal to rate their own ability as above average, average, or below average. The observer version (Appendix E) asked each respondent to rate their principal in one of these same three categories. The LPI scores of the respondents were also used to analyze this research question.

Of the 76 observers, 55.26% rated their principal as above average, 35.53% rated them as average, and 9.21% rated them as below average. Of the 26 principals, 69.23% rated themselves as above average, 30.77% rated themselves as average, and none of the principals self-rated as below average. There were wide discrepancies among some of the demographic variables for both groups.

Observers with more experience (21 – 30 years) were much more likely to rate their leader as below average (18.18%). Only 9.37% of observers with 11 – 20 years of experience rated their leader as below average, and no observers in the other two groups (0 – 11 years and 31 or more years) rated their leader in this way. Observers in the least experienced group rated their principal fairly evenly between the two higher ratings, with 52.63% of them rating as above average and 47.37% rating as average (see Table 38).

Among principals, those with less experience in public education (11 – 20 years) were slightly tougher on themselves than the more experienced principals. Only 42.86% of these less experienced leaders self-rated as above average. In contrast, 81.82% of principals with 21 – 30 years of experience rated themselves as above average and 75% of those with 31 or more years of experience rated themselves at this top level (see Table 40).

Next, principals and observers were studied as one group to determine if years of experience impacted responses. The total LPI scores for all respondents were analyzed with the SPSS statistical software package to obtain the mean, standard error, and pairwise comparisons for the various groups based on years of experience. Respondents with 0 – 10 years of experience showed a mean of 235.884 with a standard error of 13.119. The next group, with 11 – 20 years of experience, had a mean of 226.208 and a standard error of 9.751. Those with 21 – 30 years had a mean of 212.690 and a standard error of 10.774. And those with the most experience, 31 or more years, had a mean of 242.475 and a standard error of 17.824 (see Table 41).

Pairwise comparisons showed the greatest difference to be between the group with 21 – 30 years of experience and those with 31 or more years. The most experienced group had a mean that was 29.785 points higher than the other group. While this variance in means seems large, the significance value of .157 indicates a lack of statistical significance at the .05 level. The next largest difference was between those with 0 – 10 years of experience and those with 21 – 30 years of experience. In this case, the group with the least amount of experience had a mean that was 23.193 points higher than the more experienced group. Similar to the previous example, the significance value of .176 indicates a lack of statistical significance (see Table 42).

The next demographic variable to be studied using responses to the leader rating on the researcher-developed questionnaire was age group. Among observers in the 20 – 30 year age group, 66.67% rated their leader above average and none rated their leader as below average. Those in the next age group (31 – 40 years of age) leaned slightly more to the average rating—with 44% rating their leader as above average and 52% rating them as average. In both of the two older age groups, 41 – 50 and 51 or more, a large percentage of the observers rated their leader as above average. Some observers in these two groups, however, also rated their principal as below average. In the eldest group, 18.18% of the observers rated their principal below average. In the 41 – 50 age group, 11.77% gave their principal the lowest rating. This compares to 4% in the 31 – 40 age group and 0% in the 20 – 30 age group (see Table 44).

Principals had to be combined into two age groups because of the low numbers in some of the groups. Older principals (51 or more) were slightly more likely to rate

themselves above average when compared to the younger principals (31 – 50 years). Almost twice as many in the younger group rated themselves average (38.46%) than did the principals in the older group (23.08%). This demonstrated a tendency among younger principals to be conservative in their self-ratings (see Table 46).

Next, the SPSS statistical software package was used to analyze all respondents by age group. Those in the youngest group, 20 – 30 years, had a mean of 234.000 and a standard error of 18.595. Those 31 – 40 years of age had a mean of 215.790 and a standard error of 13.096. Those in the 41 – 50 age group had a mean of 227.158 with a standard error of 9.545. Those age 51 or more had a mean of 235.683 with a standard error of 11.761. The group with the lowest mean LPI total score was the 31 – 40 year old group (see Table 47).

When the pairwise comparisons were performed for age groups, the largest discrepancy of mean LPI scores was found between those 51 or older and those 31 – 40 years of age. The mean difference between these two groups was 19.894 total LPI points. The significance value, however, was above .05 at .262, which is an indication of a lack of statistical significance in the mean difference. The next largest difference was between those 20 – 30 years of age and those 31 – 40 years of age. The difference in means was 18.210, but again the significance value was higher than .05 at .426 (see Table 48).

The next demographic variable to be analyzed using the researcher-developed questionnaire was gender. Male observers rated their principal lower than their female counterparts. Only 35.71% of males rated their leader above average, while 59.68% of females gave their leader this top rating. Half of the male observers rated their

leader average, while only 32.26% of the female observers gave this rating. More male observers (14.29%) rated their leader below average than did females (8.06%) (see Table 50).

Male and female principals rated themselves above average and average at approximately the same percentages. Among male principals, 70.59% rated themselves above average and 29.41% rated themselves average. Among females, 66.67% self-rated as above average and 33.33% self-rated as average (see Table 52).

Using total LPI scores and the SPSS statistical software package, male and female principals and observers were combined in one test for mean, standard error, and pairwise comparisons. Male respondents had a mean of 228.971 and a standard error of 10.331. Females had a mean of 227.188 and a standard error of 7.454. The mean difference of 1.783 between the two groups had a significance of .889. There was essentially no difference in the way males and females responded on the LPI instrument when all participants were studied as one group (see Tables 53 and 54).

Finally, ethnicity was studied to determine if this demographic variable had any effect on responses. When principals and observers were studied separately using their responses to the researcher-generated questionnaire, white observers (61.29%) were much more likely to rate their leader as above average than those in the African American or Hispanic group (28.57%). The two groups of principals were much closer in their self-ratings. White principals self-rated above average at 68.42%, while African American or Hispanic principals self-rated above average at 71.43%. There was essentially no difference in the responses of the two groups of principals (see Tables 56 and 58).

When the LPI scores of all observers and principals were studied by ethnic groups, there was essentially no difference in the means. The mean for white participants was 228.003 with a standard error of 6.984. The mean for African American or Hispanic participants was 227.947 with a standard error of 11.277. The mean difference of .056 had a very high significance value of .997, which was an indication of a lack of statistical significance at the .05 level in the difference between the means (see Tables 59 and 60).

## **Conclusions**

A review of the literature, as well as an analysis of the data by this researcher formed the basis for the following conclusions as they relate to the purposes of this study.

1. The review of the literature established that successful leaders often share specific traits, with main themes including: the ability to create a shared vision, integrity and trust, the willingness to take risks, self-confidence, a genuine sense of caring, a collaborative spirit, and the ability to build relationships.
2. The review of the literature, including the study of leadership and management theory, was a support of the research of Kouzes and Posner (2002) and the development of the five leadership practices and the Leadership Practices Inventory.



3. The review of the literature was a support of the idea that leaders are critical to the success of any organization and that the principal is very important in transforming or maintaining successful schools.
4. The review of the literature indicated that schools are unique organizations and that principals face pressure from societal changes and their effects on children as well as increasing demands on educators and school systems.
5. The research demonstrated that there is no direct correlation between perceived leadership practices of principals in the study and academic success of students as measured by the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS).
6. The review of the literature was a recognition that the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) is only one measurement of student achievement and school success.
7. The research indicated that as a group the principals in this study rated themselves higher in regard to perceived leadership practices than did their observers. This was true of the total LPI instrument as well as for each of the five leadership practices the instrument measured.
8. The research indicated that demographic variables possibly effected responses of observers and principals differently. According to the overall leader rating from the researcher-generated questionnaire, younger principals and less experienced principals tended to rate themselves more conservatively. Younger observers and less experienced observers tended to rate their leader higher. Gender nor ethnicity had an effect on responses of principals. Female

observers and white observers, however, rated their leaders above average at a higher percentage than others. When LPI scores were used and principals and observers were studied together as one group of respondents, the differences were statistically insignificant for all demographic variables.

9. Three companion studies were also conducted in Region 5 during the same time period as this study. Each study asked the same research questions but had different populations. Christopher Soileau surveyed high school principals, Stacey Arnold surveyed elementary principals, and Fred Brent surveyed superintendents. All of these studies obtained similar findings regarding perceived leadership practices and student achievement.

## **Recommendations**

It is very important to have strong leadership in today's middle schools. The literature indicates that schools are struggling to keep up with increasing academic standards and increasing diversity among the student population. State and federal standards are rising as a result of the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which was signed into law in January of 2002. The middle school principal is a significant individual in the battle to educate early adolescent students.

As if these increasing demands were not enough to raise concern, the nation is facing a principal shortage (Erlandson, 2000; Gilman & Lanman-Givens, 2001), so finding quality leaders to navigate the challenges of the principalship is getting more difficult. Among other factors, the pressures of the job, lack of pay, and vast responsibilities of the job keep many from pursuing a principal position (Gilman & Lanman-

Givens, 2001). And yet another hurdle in the recruitment of outstanding leaders is the fact that existing principals often find the job to be very lonely, with more recognition for failures and mistakes than for accomplishments (Zellner et al., 2002).

The literature reviewed for this study combined with the findings of my research was used to make the following recommendations.

1. Middle school principals must exhibit strong leadership skills in all five of the practice areas measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory in order to succeed in today's high stress and ever-changing world of educational leadership.
2. Superintendents and school districts must carefully screen and actively recruit quality principals. Without strong principal leadership, schools are extremely unlikely to provide a high quality educational program for students.
3. Superintendents, school boards, and the public should evaluate the effectiveness of the middle school principal based on more than one measure of academic success.
4. Superintendents, school boards, and the public should consider many other variables, such as the length of time a principal is in the current position, before determining the effectiveness of the leader. Many of the components of organizational change take time to implement at a level where the effects will be visible—especially in terms of student achievement.
5. School districts must ensure that principals are provided with necessary staff development and growth opportunities throughout their careers, with a focus on instructional leadership components, in light of the demands of the Texas

accountability system and federal requirements under No Child Left Behind legislation.

6. Middle school principals should evaluate their own leadership practices by using the Leadership Practices Inventory or some other validated survey instrument to ensure personal growth.
7. School district leaders must recognize the accomplishments of their principals to encourage present principals to continue striving for excellence and to encourage others to enter the principalship.

### **Implications for Further Study**

Further study of principal leadership and student achievement is recommended to develop a greater understanding of this topic. The importance of education cannot be overstated, and therefore any research that has the potential to improve the learning process for students is worthwhile. The literature reviewed for this study combined with the findings of my research was used to formulate the following implications for further study.

1. This researcher recommends that future studies of the effects of leadership practices on student achievement be longitudinal in nature, so that time will be considered as a possible factor in a leader's impact on the academic program. Rather than a single standardized test used as a snapshot measurement of student success, change in student performance over time should be the measure of academic achievement in these longitudinal studies.

2. Using this study as a baseline, this researcher recommends a study of all Texas middle schools using the Leadership Practices Inventory to determine the effects of perceived leadership practices on student achievement. However, this study should consider other variables that may impact student achievement, including but not limited to, school size, class size, student demographics, funding issues, teacher tenure, and principal tenure.
3. A qualitative study on the impact of principals on academic achievement would be very valuable, especially since such an impact is often indirect in nature. Thick description of leadership practices and their effect on student achievement might shed new light on the topic.
4. Finally, this researcher recommends that high performing middle schools in Texas should be studied to determine what common variables exist on these campuses that may impact student performance, including but not limited to, leadership practices of the principals.

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**APPENDIX A**

**LPI SELF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY**

# LPI<sup>SELF</sup>

## Leadership Practices Inventory

by JAMES M. KOUZES  
& BARRY Z. POSNER

### INSTRUCTIONS

You will find thirty statements describing various leadership behaviors. Please read each statement carefully, and using the RATING SCALE on the right, ask yourself:

The RATING SCALE runs from 1 to 10. Choose the number that best applies to each statement.

#### “How frequently do I engage in the behavior described?”

- Be realistic about the extent to which you *actually* engage in the behavior.
- Be as honest and accurate as you can be.
- DO NOT answer in terms of how you would like to behave or in terms of how you think you should behave
- DO answer in terms of how you typically behave on most days, on most projects, and with most people.
- Be thoughtful about your responses. For example, giving yourself 10s on all items is most likely not an accurate description of your behavior. Similarly, giving yourself all 1s or all 5s is most likely not an accurate description either. Most people will do some things more or less often than they do other things.
- If you feel that a statement does not apply to you, it's probably because you don't frequently engage in the behavior. In that case, assign a rating of 3 or lower.

- 1 = Almost Never
- 2 = Rarely
- 3 = Seldom
- 4 = Once in a While
- 5 = Occasionally
- 6 = Sometimes
- 7 = Fairly Often
- 8 = Usually
- 9 = Very Frequently
- 10 = Almost Always

When you have completed the LPI-Self, please return it to:

Scott Sheppard  
3939 Diamondale Ct.  
Katy, TX 77450

Thank you.

For each statement, decide on a response and then record the corresponding number in the box to the right of the statement. After you have responded to all thirty statements, go back through the LPI one more time to make sure you have responded to each statement. *Every* statement *must* have a rating.

**LPI SELF**

To what extent do you typically engage in the following behaviors? Choose the response number that best applies to each statement and record it in the box to the right of the statement.

Score:

1. I set a personal example of what I expect of others.	
2. I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.	
3. I seek out challenging opportunities that test my own skills and abilities.	
4. I develop cooperative relationships among the people I work with.	
5. I praise people for a job well done.	
6. I spend time and energy making certain that the people I work with adhere to the principles and standards that we have agreed on.	
7. I describe a compelling image of what our future could look like.	
8. I challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.	
9. I actively listen to diverse points of view.	
10. I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities.	
11. I follow through on promises and commitments I make.	
12. I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future.	
13. I search outside the formal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.	
14. I treat others with dignity and respect.	
15. I make sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of projects.	
16. I ask for feedback on how my actions affect other people's performance.	
17. I show others how their long term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision.	
18. I ask "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected.	
19. I support the decisions that people make on their own.	
20. I publicly recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values.	
21. I build consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.	
22. I paint the "big picture" of what we aspire to accomplish.	
23. I make certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on.	
24. I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.	
25. I find ways to celebrate accomplishments.	
26. I am clear about my philosophy of leadership.	
27. I speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.	
28. I experiment and take risks, even when there is a chance of failure.	
29. I ensure that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.	
30. I give the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.	

**APPENDIX B****LPI OBSERVER LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY**

# LPI<sup>®</sup> OBSERVER

Leadership Practices Inventory

by JAMES M. KOUZES  
& BARRY Z. POSNER

## INSTRUCTIONS

You are being asked to assess the leadership behaviors of the principal of the school at which you serve on the site-based decision making committee. You will find thirty statements describing various leadership behaviors. Please read each statement carefully, and using the RATING SCALE on the right, ask yourself:

### **“How frequently does this person engage in the behavior described?”**

When selecting your response to each statement:

- Be realistic about the extent to which this person *actually* engages in the behavior.
- Be as honest and accurate as you can be.
- DO NOT answer in terms of how you would like to see this person behave or in terms of how you think he or she should behave.
- DO answer in terms of how this person typically behaves on most days, on most projects, and with most people.
- Be thoughtful about your responses. For example, giving this person 10s on all items is most likely not an accurate description of his or her behavior. Similarly, giving someone all 1s or all 5s is most likely not an accurate description either. Most people will do some things more or less often than they do other things.
- If you feel that a statement does not apply, it's probably because you don't see or experience the behavior. That means this person does not frequently engage in the behavior, at least around you. In that case, assign a rating of 3 or lower.

For each statement, decide on a response and then record the corresponding number in the box to the right of the statement. After you have responded to all thirty statements, go back through the LPI one more time to make sure you have responded to each statement. *Every* statement *must* have a rating.

The RATING SCALE runs from 1 to 10.  
Choose the number that best applies to each statement.

- 1 = Almost Never
- 2 = Rarely
- 3 = Seldom
- 4 = Once in a While
- 5 = Occasionally
- 6 = Sometimes
- 7 = Fairly Often
- 8 = Usually
- 9 = Very Frequently
- 10 = Almost Always

When you have completed the LPI-Observer, please return it to:

Scott Sheppard  
3939 Diamondale Ct.  
Katy, TX 77450

Thank you.

### LPI OBSERVER

I (the observer) am this leader's (check one):

\_\_\_\_ Manager    \_\_\_\_ Direct Report    \_\_\_\_ Co-worker    \_\_\_\_ Other

To what extent does this leader typically engage in the following behaviors? Choose the response number that best applies to each statement and record it in the box to the right of the statement.

He or She:

Score:

1. Sets a personal example of what he/she expects of others.	
2. Talks about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.	
3. Seeks out challenging opportunities that test his/her own skills and abilities.	
4. Develops cooperative relationships among the people he/she works with.	
5. Praises people for a job well done.	
6. Spends time and energy making certain that the people he/she works with adhere to the principles and standards that we have agreed on.	
7. Describes a compelling image of what our future could look like.	
8. Challenges people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.	
9. Actively listens to diverse points of view.	
10. Makes it a point to let people know about his/her confidence in their abilities.	
11. Follows through on promises and commitments he/she makes.	
12. Appeals to others to share an exciting dream of the future.	
13. Searches outside the formal boundaries of his/her organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.	
14. Treats others with dignity and respect.	
15. Makes sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of projects.	
16. Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect other people's performance.	
17. Shows others how their long term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision.	
18. Asks "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected.	
19. Supports the decisions that people make on their own.	
20. Publicly recognizes people who exemplify commitment to shared values.	
21. Builds consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.	
22. Paints the "big picture" of what we aspire to accomplish.	
23. Makes certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on.	
24. Gives people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.	
25. Finds ways to celebrate accomplishments.	
26. Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership.	
27. Speaks with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.	
28. Experiments and takes risks, even when there is a chance of failure.	
29. Ensures that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.	
30. Gives the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.	



**APPENDIX C**

**KOUZES POSNER INTERNATIONAL PERMISSION LETTER**

**KOUZES POSNER INTERNATIONAL**

15419 Banyan Lane  
Monte Sereno, California 95030  
FAX: (408) 354-9170

February 16, 2005

Mr. Larry Sheppard  
3939 Diamondale Court  
Katy, Texas 77450

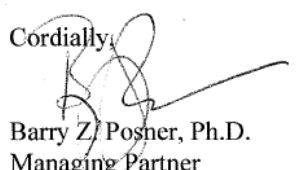
Dear Larry:

Thank you for your request to use the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) in your dissertation. We are willing to allow you to reproduce the instrument as outlined in your request, at no charge, with the following understandings:

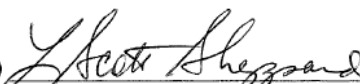
- (1) That the LPI is used only for research purposes and is not sold or used in conjunction with any compensated management development activities;
- (2) That copyright of the LPI, or any derivation of the instrument, is retained by Kouzes Posner International, and that the following copyright statement is included on all copies of the instrument: "Copyright © 2003 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. All rights reserved. Used with permission.";
- (3) That one (1) **bound** copy of your dissertation and one (1) copy of **all** papers, reports, articles, and the like which make use of the LPI data be sent **promptly** to our attention; and,
- (4) That you agree to allow us to include an abstract of your study and any other published papers utilizing the LPI on our various websites.

If the terms outlined above are acceptable, would you indicate so by signing one (1) copy of this letter and returning it to us. Best wishes for every success with your research project.

Cordially,

  
Barry Z. Posner, Ph.D.  
Managing Partner

I understand and agree to abide by these conditions:

(Signed)  Date: 2/28/05

**APPENDIX D**  
**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION (PRINCIPAL)**

***Participant Information***  
***(PRINCIPAL)***

**Please place a check in the appropriate space provided.**

1. Gender ☐ M ☐ F
  
2. Ethnicity ☐ AA ☐ Hispanic ☐ Asian ☐ White  
☐ Other
  
3. Current Primary Role in Public Education (check only one) ☐ Administrator ☐ Teacher ☐ Business Leader  
☐ Parent ☐ Paraprofessional ☐ Clerical
  
4. Age ☐ 20-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 50+
  
5. Public Education Experience ☐ 0-10 ☐ 11-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40  
☐ 41+

**Please give yourself an overall rating to indicate your performance as a leader.**

☐ Above Average ☐ Average ☐ Below Average

**APPENDIX E**  
**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION (SBDM MEMBER)**

***Participant Information***  
***(SBDM MEMBER)***

**Please place a check in the appropriate space provided.**

1. Gender ☐ M ☐ F
  
2. Ethnicity ☐ AA ☐ Hispanic ☐ Asian ☐ White  
☐ Other
  
3. Current Primary Role in Public Education (check only one) ☐ Administrator ☐ Teacher ☐ Business Leader  
☐ Parent ☐ Paraprofessional ☐ Clerical
  
4. Age ☐ 20-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 50+
  
5. Public Education Experience ☐ 0-10 ☐ 11-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40  
☐ 41+

**Please give your principal an overall rating to indicate his/her performance as a leader.**

☐ Above Average ☐ Average ☐ Below Average

**APPENDIX F**  
**LETTER TO PRINCIPALS**

**Scott Sheppard**  
3939 Diamondale Ct.  
Katy, TX 77450  
(281) 392-3962

---

April 30, 2005

Dear Principal,

I am a doctoral student at Texas A&M University under the supervision of Dr. John Hoyle in Educational Administration. I am also a high school assistant principal in the Katy Independent School District. I am presently conducting a research project in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree and I am requesting your assistance with my project.

I am studying the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by middle school principals and selected members of the campus site-based decision making committee. I am asking all Region V middle school principals and five members of each middle school site-based decision making committee to participate in this study. All that is required for participation is the completion of a questionnaire. Your responses are confidential and are vital to the accuracy of this research.

A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed. I ask that you take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. A coding system is being used to track responses. Once the data is collected, the identification link between questionnaire and respondent will be destroyed and the questionnaires will be stored in a secure container. **This packet contains a survey for your completion and a packet to be forwarded to your SBDM committee chair or designee. Please return your questionnaire in the envelope provided by May 20, 2005. Also, please encourage the SBDM members selected by your designee to return their surveys by May 20<sup>th</sup> as well.**

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this very important study. I greatly appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

Scott Sheppard  
Graduate Student  
Department of Educational Administration  
and Human Resource Development  
Texas A&M University

Enclosure



**APPENDIX G**

**LETTER TO SITE BASED DECISION MAKING COMMITTEE CHAIR OR**

**DESIGNEE**

**Scott Sheppard**  
3939 Diamondale Ct.  
Katy, TX 77450  
(281) 392-3962

---

April 30, 2005

Dear Site Based Decision Making Committee Chair or Designee,

I am a doctoral student at Texas A&M University under the supervision of Dr. John Hoyle in Educational Administration. I am also a high school assistant principal in the Katy Independent School District. I am presently conducting a research project in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree and I am requesting your assistance with my project.

I am studying the relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by middle school principals and selected members of the campus site-based decision making committee. I am asking all Region V middle school principals and five members of each middle school site-based decision making committee to participate in this study. All that is required for participation is the completion of a questionnaire. Your responses are confidential and are vital to the accuracy of this research.

A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed. I ask that you take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. A coding system is being used to track responses. Once the data is collected, the identification link between questionnaire and respondent will be destroyed and the questionnaires will be stored in a secure container. **This packet contains a survey for your completion and four additional surveys to be forwarded to other SBDM committee members that you may randomly select at your discretion. Please return your questionnaire in the envelope provided by May 20, 2005. Also, please encourage the four additional SBDM members to return their surveys by May 20<sup>th</sup> as well.**

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this very important study. I greatly appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

Scott Sheppard  
Graduate Student  
Department of Educational Administration  
and Human Resource Development  
Texas A&M University

Enclosure

**APPENDIX H**  
**INFORMATION SHEET**

### Information Sheet

***The Relationship Between Student Performance and Leadership Practices as Perceived by Principals and Selected Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Committee Members of Middle Schools in Region 5 Education Service Center (ESC), Texas.***

- You have been asked to participate in a research study regarding the leadership practices of middle school principals in Region 5 ESC as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory.
- You have been selected to be a possible participant because you are either a middle school principal or you are a member of a SBDM committee in Region 5.
- A total of 35 principals have been asked to participate in this study.
- A total of 175 SBDM committee members have been asked to participate in this study.
- The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship between student performance and leadership practices as perceived by principals and SBDM committee members in middle schools.
- This study is the topic of a record of study.
- This study is confidential and your responses will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published.
- If you agree to be in this study you will be asked to complete a survey that will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.
- Survey instruments will be distributed to participants through the mail.
- There will be a two-week time span for the instruments to be completed.
- Survey questions on the survey will be based on leadership practices.
- Research records will be stored securely and only Scott Sheppard will have access to the records.
- You can contact Scott Sheppard at 281-237-6700 ([sshepp@yahoo.com](mailto:sshepp@yahoo.com)) or Dr. John Hoyle at 979-845-2748 ([jhoyle@tamu.edu](mailto:jhoyle@tamu.edu)) with any questions about this study.
- Dr. John Hoyle can also be reached at College of Education and Human Resource Development, 4226 TAMU, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843-4226.
- This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board- Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, you can contact the Institutional Review Board at (979) 458-4067.
- **By returning this instrument you hereby agree to participate in this research.**

**VITA**

Name: Larry Scott Sheppard

Address: 3939 Diamondale Court  
Katy, TX 77450

Email Address: sshepp@yahoo.com

Education: Ed.D., Educational Administration, Texas A&M University, 2007  
M.Ed., Education, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX, 2000  
B. Mus., Music Education, Lamar University, Beaumont, TX, 1988

Professional Experience: Principal, Katy Junior High School, Katy ISD, TX, 2005 – present  
Administrative Assistant Principal, Katy High School, Katy ISD, TX, 2004 – 2005  
Principal, Kirbyville Junior High School, Kirbyville CISD, Kirbyville, TX, 2001 – 2004  
Band Director, Kirbyville High School; District Music Supervisor, Kirbyville CISD, Kirbyville, TX, 1991 – 2001  
Band Director, Kirbyville Junior High School, Kirbyville CISD, Kirbyville, TX, 1990 – 1991  
Assistant Band Director, Jasper High School and Junior High, Jasper ISD, Jasper, TX, 1988 – 1990

The typist for this dissertation was Mr. Bill A. Ashworth, Jr.